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**CORPUS DELICTI**







OUIDA KEETON RESTING DURING HER TRIAL FOR  
MATRICIDE.

# CORPUS DELICTI

*An Enquiry into the Various Methods by  
which Famous Murderers have Disposed  
of the Bodies of their Victims*

By  
DAVID WHITELAW

“ I saw their starved lips in the gloom  
In horrid warning gaping wide.”

—Keats.

GEOFFREY BLES  
TWO MANCHESTER SQUARE LONDON  
1936

To  
SIR PERCY EVERETT  
and our fellow members  
of  
The Crimes Club

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## CHAPTER I

### DISPOSAL BY BURIAL

“ **H**OW long will a man lie i’ the earth ere he rot ? ” How often must Hamlet’s leading question to the grave-digger have passed through the tortured minds of the world’s murderers in the still hours when darkness hems them in and the small voice of conscience whispers to them. For to every shedder of blood there comes inevitably the dread moment when, his revenge or hatred satisfied, he finds himself alone with the cold clay of his enemy, and knows that his victim has suddenly become an enemy indeed, a far greater peril to him in death than ever he had been in life.

There is no such thing as “ the perfect murder ” and there are few, very few, perfect disposals. It may well be that our cemeteries and churchyards still hold beneath the sculptured pomp of granite and marble or in funeral urn, secrets hidden for all time from the eyes of man, but these cases are surely extremely rare. For our modern Crippens and Mahons are faced with precisely the same problems as those that faced the Dumollards and Eugene Arams of another age, and it is scarcely

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to be wondered at that every avenue has been explored again and again by which the *corpus delicti* may be eliminated. Earth, fire, the corrosive action of acids, transportation, dismemberment—all have been tried and found wanting. The earth yields up its secret, the furnace fails to destroy entirely, the sea gives up its dead, the railway cloak-room its ghastly deposit ; and your Thornes, your Websters and your Bastiens troop off, a grim company, to Devil's Island or the execution shed. Foul deeds will out : little dogs will scratch among the dead leaves in the tangled undergrowth of remote woodlands, and small boys will fish for tiddlers on canal banks and probe deep with their sticks the stagnant mud of weed-grown ponds. Prying busybodies will note any great volume of smoke belching forth from one's chimneys, as did the neighbours at Gambais, whose evidence was instrumental in bringing the unspeakable Landru to the guillotine. Smoke, too, as will be shown, was a factor in bringing home to Carrara the murder of Frédéric Lamarre in the house of the mushroom-grower in the rue Etienne-Dolet.

We in England are too far north of the Equator to be prone to murder. The *crime passionel* is something of a rarity among us, and in settling our differences with our fellow men we are apt to rely more on the law courts than on coke hammer or revolver. Moreover, there are but few spots in

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this somewhat overcrowded isle where one can, with any degree of safety, conceal inconvenient bodies from observation, for there is barely a square yard of soil that is not trodden sooner or later by the foot of man. No safety is to be found even on the trackless Highland wastes, or the heathered moors of Northumbria, and our rivers are too small and thread their way through far too densely-populated districts to be suitable channels for disposal.

In America it is different, which may, perhaps, account in part for the high average in the numbers of murders that are yearly committed in that country. True, many of these killings are the work of criminal gangs where the victim is left riddled with machine-gun bullets on his own doorstep, or bound with strands of adhesive plaster at the bottom of the East River or the Potomac or what-not, but there must be each year a thousand or more slayings in which the criminal, in an endeavour to save his own skin, is faced with the problem of disposing of that of his victim. Detection is difficult, the vast lakes, the dense forests of scrub oak and pine, the southern swamps and northern wastes and the widely-scattered communities of primitive folk, are all in favour of the criminal, but the sheriffs and the homicide squads almost invariably, sooner or later, find the body, although not always the murderer, who can in a few hours after the commission of a crime put a

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hundred miles between the scene of his crime and himself.

A close study of the world's criminal records will prove that the first thought of the murderer is almost invariably of the earth. To hide his ghastly handiwork from the sight of men, to say nothing of his own, he will not rest till the kindly soil has thrown a pall over the horror of his deed. Then and then only will he give serious thought to the secondary consideration, that of his own safety. This is the more surprising when one considers that at the very first suspicion of foul play the mind of authority follows precisely the same path as that of the murderer and that the police fly immediately to spade and pick-axe. Apart from this, more often than not, the grisly task of the criminal has to be performed in the open, where there is always the chance of being observed by passers-by or by inquisitive neighbours at nearby windows. Since the days of Mr. Corder and Maria Marten of Red Barn fame, criminal annals have been filled with the names of those who have had recourse to the good red earth. Dougal, Devereux and Thorne in our country, Mozok and Mortensen in the States, Dumollard, Robert, and Bastien in France, to name but a few.

Let us look into the case of Euphemia Mozok, who is at present serving a life sentence in the Michigan Big House. Portraiture taken under the distressing conditions attached to the atmo-

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sphere of a police office can never be altogether flattering but, even making allowance for this handicap, Euphemia would appear to possess no great pretensions to beauty although, when the lady came so prominently into the news, the reporters, scenting a good headline, accorded her the flattering title of "the Siren from Serbia." Hers was the hard, sullen face of the peasant of the Near East, where life is a grim and difficult business, and yet surely Euphemia must have exercised on the opposite sex some definite charm that has eluded the lens of the official camera. For not only did she leave behind her at least one husband in her native Serbia when, at the tender age of twenty, she emigrated to Canada, but she managed to carry on the matrimonial work with marked success on the further side of the Atlantic. Surely this suggests sex appeal of no mean order.

The first of the unfortunate gentlemen to fall beneath her sway after landing at Montreal bore the curious name of Woropchuck, but Mr. Woropchuck has, fortunately for himself, little to do with the story of Euphemia, for that lady very soon tired of him and, throwing him into the discards, smuggled herself over the border into the States, searching, as it were, for a new deal in the game of life. She was not long in finding her feet in the new land, her first capture being a man named Sokolski, a somewhat frugal gentleman who, on embracing matrimony, decided to relieve the

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financial situation by the taking in of a lodger. Three, he estimated, could live as cheaply as two, but Mr. Sokolski was soon to learn that the taking in of lodgers was a very risky business with a lady like Euphemia about the house. It was not long before the inevitable happened and Mr. Uderovich, the dweller within the Sokolski gates, found himself sitting extremely pretty. But that was not enough for him. How pleasant it would be, he thought, if he could lead the fair Euphemia to the altar and so dig himself into the Dyre Street household for good and all. And Mr. Uderovich seems to have lost no time in going into action. In due course Mr. Sokolski ceased to be a member of the household, the Dyre Street home knew him no more and the police were asking a few pertinent questions as to his whereabouts. But Euphemia and her young man lodger were not to be caught napping, they had their story for the authorities all ready and they stood up to the grilling through which they were put with a composure and dignity hardly to be looked for in people of their class. They told their story lucidly and having done so voiced their indignation at the outrageous treatment handed out to them.

Was it their fault, they asked, if Sokolski had chosen to desert his wife? Was it not rather a case for sympathy than for suspicion? The lady even took advantage of there being no *corpus delicti* to accuse the absent Mr. Sokolski of cruelty

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and desertion and on these grounds applied for, and obtained, with very little difficulty, a divorce. And from that moment Euphemia and her amorous lodger disappeared from official ken. At least for a time.

We next hear of the Serbian woman when a distressed gentleman giving the name of Steven Mondich called on the authorities with a sad and tearful story of domestic trouble. His wife, he told the police captain, had left him and he was most desirous that she should be found and returned to the nest. The officials, who had heard that kind of story before, were sympathetic but not very helpful. America was a pretty big place, they pointed out to Mr. Mondich, and if the missing woman wished to remain undiscovered there was little they could do : it was a free country. But if Mr. Mondich cared to give them a full description or, better still, let them see a picture of the missing woman, then they would throw out the drag-net for her and let him know the result. Mr. Mondich then produced from his pocket a cherished pictorial representation of himself and the lady taken on holiday somewhere in the mountains. It was a charming picture set in romantic surroundings of carefree domestic bliss but the police, the moment they saw the photograph, were not very interested in that angle of the missing Mrs. Mondich. But they were very, very interested in another angle, for the pictured face smiling up at them stirred

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unpleasant chords of memory. Although three years had passed since the regrettable scenes in the police office in connection with the missing Mr. Sokolski there was little doubt but that Mrs. Mondich and Mrs. Sokolski were one and the same. They asked Mr. Mondich to leave the picture with them and although the bereaved husband seemed loth to part with this one link with his punctured romance he agreed on the clear understanding that it should be kept clean and returned to him in due course. The police lost no time. Perhaps on account of Mrs. Mondich not having taken any great trouble to cover up her tracks the lady was soon run to earth and for the second time Euphemia found herself detained and questioned.

Faced once more with the prospect of another grilling the good lady waxed indignant. It was an outrage. Had she not gone through all this three years ago? Why bring all this Sokolski business up again? The man had never been found alive or dead and surely Euphemia's whole life was not to be ruined because a low-down like Sokolski had been mean enough to walk out on her. But the police, by this time, no doubt with bitter memories of their previous defeat at Euphemia's hands, were not to be put off so easily as formerly. Here was the chance they had been waiting for for three years. Perhaps, they suggested, if Mr. Uderovich would come forward they might be able to get to the bottom of a matter

THE DREAD OF THE SECRET POISONER A SCENE AT AN EXHUMATION.





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that had been a thorn in the official side for so long a time. It was understood, they reminded the lady, that Euphemia at their last meeting had been about to bestow her hand on Mr. Uderovich and, if this had been the case, then where did Mr. Mondich come into the picture? It was all really most confusing.

It was Euphemia's obvious reluctance to discuss in any way her former lodger and lover that caused the police to extend the drag-net in an endeavour to bring in Mr. Uderovich to join the little party at headquarters. But curiously enough the man could not be found—like Mr. Sokolski he would seem to have vanished into thin air—and the questions fired at Euphemia became more and more pertinent and apparently more and more difficult to answer. Thirty hours grilling with practically no sleep and under a fierce spotlight . . . and Euphemia cracked and told the whole story.

The eternal triangle again, but with certain differences that lifted it out of the ruck. Euphemia was nothing if not original and the lady, once having made up her mind to speak, seemed rather to glory in her many and varied conquests. Mr. Uderovich had, as was only to be expected, been beneath the Dyre Street roof but a few short hours before he was at Euphemia's feet and before long, quite ignoring Mr. Sokolski's prior claims, he was expressing his desire to make her his wife. No doubt under the impression that all was fair in

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love and war he even held out a tentative suggestion to Euphemia that it might not be altogether a bad idea to remove the inconvenient husband from the path of their happiness. Moreover, by so doing, they would be able to possess themselves of such property as the frugal Mr. Sokolski had accumulated and for which, if their little plan succeeded, he would be having no further use. Euphemia had seen the logic of this reasoning but she had hesitated. Why, she asked Uderovich, should they complicate matters by murder? She had walked out of the lives of two or three husbands already and why not, seeing the process was so simple, do the same to Sokolski? But Mr. Uderovich, thinking no doubt of the Sokolski nest egg, was all for direct action and so when, during a drive out in the country around Detroit, Mr. Uderovich stopped the car on a lonely road and proceeded to batter Mr. Sokolski to death with a large stone, Euphemia was shocked but not altogether surprised. But, as she put it to the police, what could she do?

Moreover Euphemia took no little credit to herself in the fact that after the killing of Mr. Sokolski any feelings of affection she might have entertained towards Mr. Uderovich changed utterly. The woman's fine nature had asserted itself and she had experienced a definite repugnance to the man who had so cruelly treated her husband, "a change of heart" she called it. And so when, glowing with justifiable pride, as might

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one of Arthur's fabled knights, at his exploits, Mr. Uderovich duly presented himself before her to claim his reward, her finer feelings were so outraged at the idea of linking herself to a cold and callous murderer that, to put an end to his importunities, she shot him three times in the back with a revolver that happened to be near at hand and buried the body beneath the house in Dyre Street. Then, being once more free to shape her own destinies, Euphemia lost no time in fastening her matrimonial talons on to Mr. Mondich. It was her heartless desertion of this trusting male that the Siren had to thank for the troubles that now descended upon her. The most worm-like of her many victims had turned. In the solitude of her prison cell as she awaited trial the good lady must often have cursed that holiday picture taken in the mountains and bitterly regretted not borrowing a leaf out of the book of the late Mr. Uderovich. After all, dead men cannot go squealing to the police that they have been deserted.

And so Euphemia was found guilty of the murder of Mr. Uderovich and her account with the police, now three years over-due, was at last squared. Two men who were present at the trial watched the proceedings with considerable interest and perhaps with a muttered prayer of thankfulness. For these two gentlemen were Mr. George Woropchuck and Mr. Steve Mondich, the sole survivors,

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as it were, of Euphemia's polyandrous adventures. Only fifteen inches of earth covered the remains of Mr. Uderovich till at last the grave gave up its secret. But it took the better part of three years for it do to so.

Belle Gunness dug deeper and her farm out in Indiana was to all intents and purposes nothing less than a cemetery when she, too, met her Waterloo. Here again, in the pictured representations of Belle there can be seen no reason why men should flock to answer her matrimonial advertisements, the wording of which should have not only put any sane man at once on his guard but should have attracted to the Indiana farm the attention of the authorities. Rich, good-looking women do not need to advertise to secure partners in their affections and in the management of their spacious estates, and Belle's letters to her prospects telling them to be sure to bring all their money with them surely ought to have roused suspicion in any but a congenital idiot. But it was long before her fate overtook her and it was not till the brother of one of her victims instituted enquiries that Belle appreciated that her game was finished. The woman never faced her judges, for when the police arrived at the farm the place was a raging furnace and there is little doubt that Belle Gunness perished in the flames. Versed as the woman was, among other things, in the gentle art of insurance fraud Belle knew all about incendiaryism and clearly

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preferred death to facing the irate relatives of the dozen or more gentlemen whose bones were found buried in her garden.

The matrimonial lure was the one chosen by the mass murderers Watson and Kiss. Watson confessed to nine killings and the number of Kiss's victims will never be known, but they certainly reached double figures. Burke and Hare, as is well known, adopted the method of disposal for profit.

One of Russia's great mass killers was a cab driver who used to wait outside the Petrograd station at Moscow and on seeing a likely victim would whisper to him that certain valuable jewels and furs had come into his possession through the families of the aristocrats who had suffered in the revolution. Tempted by the bait of a good bargain the prospect would agree to be driven to his home where he would be quickly despatched. It was only because the cabman chastised a nephew who lived with him that the crimes of this fiend were discovered, the nephew, in revenge for his beating, going to the police with the information that all was not as it should be in his uncle's home. The garden was dug up and it was then estimated that the sum total of the cab driver's victims ran well into three figures. Possibly, as these crimes took place in 1923, Russia was too busy with her own mass murders at the time to worry much about a mere hundred or so.

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It was a piece of clothing, a mere scrap of a red print dress, that brought John Holloway to the attention of Hangman Calcraft. Holloway, who was an employee on the old Chain Pier at Brighton, lived at Rottingdean, and, Brighton not being at that time the bright spot that it is to-day, John solaced himself with amorous dalliance among the maidens of Rottingdean. In due course it became fairly obvious that marriage was indicated in the case of one of these ladies but, pressed as he was into matrimony, John Holloway found the yoke oppressive and somewhat of a deterrent to the full enjoyment of his leisure hours. Poor Celia would seem to have had rather a rough time with her husband who ill-used her shamefully and in the end deserted her for another woman, Ann Kennett. It was Celia's natural irritation at the existing conditions that caused her death and subsequent burial in a plantation on the Downs behind Rottingdean.

Two labourers, David Mascall and Abe Gilham, in passing through the little wood were surprised to see protruding from the earth in a secluded glade a portion of red printed calico and thinking that it might be the hiding-place of the proceeds of a recent burglary in the neighbourhood they left it undisturbed and gave information to the police. It was then that the headless body of Celia Holloway was brought to light. Celia's disappearance seems to have caused no great stir in

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the sleepy downland village and there was at first great uncertainty as to the identity of the remains. It was a sister of the dead girl, a Mrs. Bishop, who came forward and recognised the red material of the dress. When it was pointed out to her that there might be many similar dresses in Sussex the woman produced a patchwork quilt in which were sewn portions of the same material that matched in every particular the scrap dug from the grave in the plantation. And from the identification of Mrs. Holloway it was not a very long jump to Mr. Holloway.

There were, of course, the usual denials but the finding of poor Celia's head in a house that had lately been in the occupation of John and Ann Kennett was quite unanswerable and John Holloway duly paid the penalty.

A terrible story of disposal by burial comes from Spain. There is, nestling at the foot of the Pyrenees, a small village named Prades where life runs smoothly and uneventfully and where one would hardly look to find tragedy. In the year 1876 the whole social life of Prades centred round the figure of its padre, the Abbé Dagasta, whose benevolence and charity were renowned for miles around. To his doors came on a spring morning a wayfarer who gave his name as Segundo and who craved assistance. Segundo told the usual hard luck tale and the good Abbé at once took him in as a guest at the seminary over which he

was the spiritual head. Segundo was duly grateful and would no doubt have stayed but a few days, received a little financial assistance for his further journey, and gone his way. But as ill-luck would have it he met in the grounds of the seminary a girl named Fiammetta who was a sewing maid to the nuns in the institution. Fiammetta's beauty decided Segundo to prolong his stay, and, to excuse this, he asked for and obtained the post of under-gardener. Firmly entrenched, the man now made violent love to the pretty sewing maid and by this incurred the enmity of one of the other gardeners who had hoped to marry the girl himself. There was immediately bad blood between the two men and there is no doubt but that the rival went to the Abbé with his stories of the new-comer, stories that doubtless lost nothing in the telling. Be that as it may, Segundo stood a very good chance of being sent about his business when the Abbé suddenly disappeared. He had been seen walking in the garden with Segundo, and the two seemed to be discussing the arrangement of flower beds and various gardening details for the summer. Segundo was at once suspected of having had a hand in the old priest's disappearance, a suspicion that was fanned into fierce flame by his rival to the affections of the fair Fiammetta. The garden was thoroughly searched and at the far end under the lee of a high brick wall the earth seemed to have been disturbed. As the police

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began to dig Segundo, who was watching them, collapsed and his confession followed. So callous was his statement that it may be given here in full :

“ On the fifth of April I went into the study to induce him to come into the garden to murder him, but seeing more persons in the room I changed my mind. The Abbé did come into the garden a few hours later but the pupils being then in the seminary I postponed the execution of my designs till next day. At six o’clock on the morning of the sixth of April, I woke up the superior and asked him to come down into the garden under the pretext that my work had now been finished and that I was ready to leave Prades. The superior walked in front of me and on arriving at the bottom of the garden near the cellar, I seized a gun which I had hidden behind a tree and fired it point-blank in his face. He tried to shout for assistance ; I then took my handkerchief and tied it tightly to prevent his screaming. I dug the grave before the Abbé’s eyes and finished him with blows from my spade. I threw the earth upon him and flattened out the spot with the garden roller.”

It is gratifying to be able to state that Segundo met his death by the extremely unpleasant method known as garotting.

### II

Had Henry Wainwright lived an isolated existence on a Scottish moor or among the vast

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swamps of Southern America no doubt some mountain tarn or oozy river-bed would have served his purpose in disposing of the remains of poor Harriet Lane. In the teeming heart of Whitechapel he had to do the best he could with the material ready to his hand and even in that overcrowded community the earth hid his crime for a full year. Like so many other murderers Henry Wainwright, when he saw the lifeless body at his feet, had thought immediately of burial. He had taken the line of least resistance and, so long as this temporary method held good, Harriet remained unavenged. It was only when circumstances over which he had no control prompted the removal of the cadaver to a new place of concealment that he was at last brought to justice.

Wainwright lived apparently happily with his wife and children in Tredegar Square, a secluded little backwater that lies behind the Mile End Road, but it is clear that the man's innate love of domesticity did not end there. For not many yards away from his home he maintained another and unofficial love nest presided over by a charming little ex-milliner named Harriet Lane. Harriet had come from her Essex home to the great city and, after various employments, had deserted the tedium of long hours and scanty pay for the protection of the handsome Henry Wainwright and had already presented that gentleman with two children

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when the fate that watches over us mortals and moves the pieces on the chess-board we call life thought fit to throw a monkey-wrench into the smoothly working machinery of Henry's affairs, and incidentally into Miss Lane's as well. The cause of the trouble was not very far to seek. The anxiety and financial responsibility attached to the support of two distinct homes, taken together with late hours, convivial company and inattention to business can have but one result, and the grim spectre of bankruptcy at last faced Wainwright. The descent after that was rapid.

Poor Harriet, deprived of her protector's generous support—for it must be admitted that Henry was apparently a good provider while things were good—grew somewhat difficult and it is on record that the little lady upon occasions flew to alcohol as an antidote to her increasing anxieties concerning the future of herself and her children. And liquor only served to complicate matters already complicated enough. Harriet was turned out of lodgings after lodging, she had pawned most of her little possessions and in her distress she looked hopefully to Henry for assistance. She became irritable and inconsiderate, so inconsiderate, indeed, of both his and her own interests, that she more than once had the temerity to call on Wainwright at his place of business, creating scenes that were extremely distasteful to that gentleman and which implanted in him a dread that the visits might be but preludes

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to other visits to his legitimate wife in Tredegar Square—and the respect of his family and his fellow men were to Henry Wainwright obsessions. It was then that the man, harassed by financial worries and the desire to preserve unsullied the respectable reputation he enjoyed in the White-chapel district, decided upon drastic measures to ease a situation that was rapidly becoming intolerable. Had Harriet been willing to come to terms she might have returned to the bosom of her family, in their cottage home in Waltham Cross, chastened but not entirely penniless. Her adventure in the big city would be over, she would have returned to Essex a soiled dove . . . but she would at least have been alive and able to look forward, perhaps, to brighter days. But as the lady proved more and more difficult and unreasonable, Henry shrugged his broad shoulders with the air of the complete fatalist, purchased a spade and pick-axe and some hundredweight of chloride of lime, redeemed from the custody of a nearby pawnbroker his revolver and, with the purchase of a few cartridges, his arrangements were practically complete. Harriet Lane's visit to Henry's place of business on September 11th, 1874, was her last.

As was to be expected, Harriet's parents wanted to know what had become of her but Henry had his story ready and he soon put that right. Harriet had left him, he informed her father, and had run off with a man named Friake and to support this

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story Wainwright showed Mr. Lane a telegram from Dover, presumably from the runaways, but which was supposed to have been sent by Henry's brother Thomas, who later stood by his side in the dock at the Old Bailey and received a long term of imprisonment as an accessory. Apart from their immediate relations and contacts girls like Harriet Lane are seldom greatly missed and certainly after satisfying Mr. Lane, apparently not a very difficult undertaking, Henry had nothing more to fear. It was not till a year later that his mistress was avenged.

Henry's financial affairs grew steadily worse and at last the time arrived when it became necessary for him to raise a mortgage on his Whitechapel Road premises. This mortgage afforded but temporary relief and in due course it fell in and although his creditor gave Henry ample time to repay there was at last nothing for it but to foreclose and take possession. Then Henry found himself faced with the somewhat vital problem of the lady lying beneath the floor of his paint room. A certain musty odour that had pervaded the premises of late had not unduly worried Henry knowing, as he did, its source, but it could hardly fail to attract the notice of an incoming tenant and the new landlord would in all probability think of defective drains and sewers and would investigate the source of the unpleasantness. Something had to be done, and quickly. So Henry and

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his brother put in a dreadful night's work disinterring the remains of Henry's late mistress and sewing them into two separate parcels, using for the purpose black American cloth and pack thread. Carrying these out into the Whitechapel Road the following morning, Henry very foolishly asked a youth to mind them while he fetched a cab from the rank opposite Whitechapel Church, surely one of the stupidest acts in criminal history.

Now whether it was faulty packing on Henry's part or undue inquisitiveness on the part of the minder is not known, but the fact remains that when Henry departed in the cab with his grim burdens, the youth, a boy named Stokes, thought fit to inform the constable on point duty nearby of the suspicions that had occurred to him. That was for Henry the beginning of the end. While a layer of earth covered the remains of the unfortunate Harriet her killer was comparatively safe and had he, after satisfying the enquiries of the Lane family, fled the country, Henry Wainwright might have died in his bed instead of in the execution shed at Newgate. Sooner or later the crime would, of course, have been discovered but, had the murderer not been afraid of the new tenant making investigations, Harriet might have remained where she was, undisturbed, for many a long day. Moreover, had Henry succeeded in reaching his destination, the "Hen and Chickens" in the Borough, where, deep in the cellars, he had prepared a second resting-

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place for Harriet Lane, the day of retribution might have been delayed for ever.

It will be remembered that a like fear of investigation attacked Mr. Probert after the murder at Elstree of William Weare. True, Probert had had no actual hand in the crime, but in those days the mere knowledge of the murder having taken place would have meant Tyburn, anyway. The suggestion that the body of the victim should be deposited in Probert's pond, put forward by the actual murderer, John Thurtell, raised many objections from Probert. Giggs Hill Cottage, where he lived with his family, was only a stone's throw from the pond, and, moreover, his tenancy had, as had Wainwright's in the Whitechapel Road, become somewhat uncertain. Probert, too, had suffered severe reverses in his business of card-sharpening and the profits accruing from the running of his illicit still had of late been sadly falling off, there was talk even of the landlord of Giggs Hill evicting his tenant and himself taking possession. The sharing out of the booty from the murder had done little to ease the financial situation as it was understood that the main portion of the money carried by the victim had been secreted away by the double-crosser Thurtell as his own share before there was anything in the nature of a division of spoils. It was only on the definite understanding that the murdered man's presence in the Giggs Hill pond should be but temporary that Probert

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at last gave a grudging assent. Later the body was taken from the pond and carried to a larger one near Elstree, where it was deposited and where, shortly afterwards, it was discovered. When the Bow Street runners became busy Probert saved his skin by turning King's Evidence, but here again the arrangement was but temporary, Probert being hanged shortly after Thurtell for horse-stealing. Thurtell himself, the actual murderer of Weare, was, it will be remembered, hanged at Hertford.

Poor Harriet Lane had been as sharp a thorn in Henry Wainwright's side as had William Weare in Jack Thurtell's, but elimination and subsequent disposal did little in either case to ease matters for the killers. The thorns in the side merely became more poignant. There are a thousand and one ways by which a living entity can be quietened : bribery, promises, threats—but one cannot argue with a corpse or reason with a departed spirit. With the passing of breath the victim comes into his own and one can almost imagine William Weare and Harriet Lane, lips curled back from teeth in a sardonic smile, as though in death they were grimly enjoying the predicament in which they had placed the gentlemen who had robbed them of life. Theirs at last was the victory. . . .

Legitimate burial has times without number been brought into play by murderers, although there must be for ever hanging over their heads

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the dread of exhumation such as brought Armstrong, Seddon, Chapman and a host of others to the scaffold. The rigidity of the laws with regard to cremation has closed many an avenue to the killer, robbing him of the sanctuary of the funeral urn and leaving him but one protection by law in the matter of concealment: the grave. One can imagine the relief that is felt by the criminal as he hears the dull thud of the earth on the coffin-lid of his victim, listens to the droning of the burial service. With what joy he must watch the erection of the granite slab setting forth the virtues of the departed and, he hopes, sealing up his secret for ever. Little does he visualise the possibility of a night-shrouded cemetery with canvas screens round a grave, the smell of newly-turned earth and the dim light of lanterns as the officials from the Home Office and Scotland Yard go about their lawful occasions. It seems strange that your killer, once his victim is battenéd down by the graveyard soil, does not at once either change his venue or his tactics. Surely Herbert Armstrong, after seeing his poisoned wife decently buried according to the forms of law, could have found other places where his undoubted qualities as a solicitor could have found scope. Why should he elect to carry on his work of destruction of life in so small a township as Hay with rumour and gossip as his continual companions? Why could not Chapman be content to leave the unfortunate Mrs. Spink

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and Bessie Taylor in their respective graves at Leyton and Lynn and change his tactics with Maud Marsh? Did antimony obsess him as bath-tubs obsessed Joseph Smith? Why go on in the same old way, using the same old methods that must some day inevitably bring them to justice? The answer is that, fortunately for the forces of law and order, your real murderer seems to be possessed of a one-way mind in which originality has little or no part. Therein lies the comparative security of John Citizen.

Chapman was a cosmopolitan, he knew the Continental cities and their underworlds, he had lived in America and in those days when passports were either unnecessary or easy to obtain he could surely, had he possessed the elements of intelligence, have escaped the rope for longer than he did. The late William Le Queux in his memoirs *Things I Know* tells a strange story that may, in some vague way, link up with the fiend George Chapman. He tells of a document that was handed to him by an official of the Kerensky government after the death of Rasputin ; it had been found in a cellar of the monk's house, and was supposed to have been written by the sinister mystic himself. It is difficult to attach credence to this amazing document and it would hardly be worth while quoting from it but for the vague connection it has with Chapman. Le Queux tells how this story was given to him by the official in order that he might use it in the

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life he was at that time writing of Rasputin. Here is an extract from the document for what it is worth :

London was horrified by the evil work of a mysterious criminal known as Jack the Ripper, who killed and mutilated a number of women of ill-repute in the East End of the city. The repetition of the appalling crimes mystified the whole world and the true author of these atrocities was disclosed by a Russian well known in London named Nideroest, a spy in the Russian Secret Service, who was a member of the Jubilee Street Club, the Anarchist centre in the East End of London. One night in the club the identity of Jack the Ripper was revealed to him by an old Russian Anarchist, Nicholas Zverieff. The mysterious assassin was Doctor Alexander Pedachenko, who had once been on the staff of the Maternity Hospital at Tver, and who lived in the Mullionnaya but who had gone to London, where he lived with his sister in Westmorland Road, Walworth. From there he sallied forth at night to Whitechapel, where he committed his secret crimes. Alexander Pedachenko, according to Zverieff, was aided by a friend of his named Levitski and a young tailoress called Winberg. The latter would approach the victim and hold her in conversation, and Levitski kept watch for the police patrols while the murders and mutilations took place. Levitski who had been born in London, wrote the warning post-cards signed "Jack the Ripper" to the police and the Press. It was through Levitski that Zverieff knew the truth. On his return to Russia the doctor was caught red-handed attempting to murder a woman named Vogak and was eventually sent to an asylum, where he

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died in 1908. Such are the actual facts of the Jack the Ripper Mystery.

One can almost suspect Le Queux of mixing fact and fiction or writing with tongue in cheek, but there are certain points in his story which bear looking into. A close study of the evidence and the rumours connected with the Whitechapel murders certainly link up Chapman with the series of atrocities and point a definite finger of suspicion in his direction. Chapman's real name was Kloskowski, and he was a native of Poland ; Le Queux's Pedachenko was a Russian. The girl Winberg in the story was a tailoress ; one of Kloskowski's friends who was closely questioned by the police at the time of his arrest was Lucy Bladerski, the sister of a tailor. The Jubilee Club in the story is balanced by a Polish Club in the Kloskowski proceedings. Kloskowski had been attached to a hospital in Poland ; Pedachenko to a similar establishment in Russia. Chief-Inspector Aberline, who handled the Ripper murders, was more or less convinced that in arresting Kloskowski, or Chapman, they had also arrested Jack the Ripper. To pursue the matter a step further the first Ripper murder, that of a prostitute named Mary Ann Nicholls in Thrawl Street, Spitalfields, was committed on August 31st, 1888, the year Severin Kloskowski arrived in England, where he took up residence in Whitechapel. The description given

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to the police of the supposed murderer of the woman Kelly, in November of the same year, fits Kloskowski like the proverbial glove. Moreover, during the time that Kloskowski was in America in 1900, the Ripper murders ceased in London, although similar crimes were reported from Jersey City, where the Pole had opened a barber's shop. Coincidence, perhaps, but surely significant.

### III

Now we come to Martin Dumollard, another gentleman who was accorded quite a prolonged breathing space while the kindly earth hid from the eyes of the world his series of atrocious crimes. Dumollard was a peasant living near Lyons, a hare-lipped repulsive brute, whose habit it was to seek his prey among the country girls who came to the city in search of employment. He would station himself on the Guillotière Bridge, or in the principal squares of the town and, on picking out a likely victim, would begin his operations. He himself would be dressed sombrely, as befitted a servant of the upper class, and his manner of approaching his prospect left nothing to be desired. Practice had made the man perfect and in spite of his facial handicap he had managed to acquire an ingratiating manner. Lifting his hat, he would ask the girl if she would be so kind as to direct him to a registry office. He would volunteer the infor-

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mation that he was the steward of a lady living in a château in the country and that, unfortunately, a housemaid who had been with his mistress for years had left to be married, and he had been sent into Lyons to engage a girl to fill the vacancy. He would dilate on the amenities of his situation, the excellent wages paid, the good living and ample leisure afforded the staff and would, perhaps, mention the munificent *dot* that the mistress had so generously given to the maid who was leaving. If he had judged correctly the type of girl to whom he addressed himself—and Dumollard made but few mistakes—his work was all but done. Small wonder that the girl, dazzled at the prospect of entering so lucrative a service, fell into the trap so cunningly laid for her. Could she not save monsieur the trouble of going on to the registry office? She herself had come to Lyons in search of a housemaid's place and would be glad to enter the service of his mistress. But Dumollard would hesitate, there were the matters of character and references to be thought of, but if the girl would accompany him to his mistress and bring her box with her, he had no doubt that these little matters could be satisfactorily arranged. Dumollard was yet to learn that one could take the pitcher to the water once too often. That once was when he accosted Marie Pichon on the Guillotière Bridge.

Victorine Perrin, Marie Buday, Olympe Alabert, Marie Curt—these are some of the unfortunate

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young women who had preceded Marie Pichon. They and others had accompanied Dumollard into the country to interview his mythical mistress, taking with them their boxes containing their few possessions ; some of them had escaped with their lives, some were never again heard of. But Marie Pichon declined to follow suit, and made her escape when she saw that the man had put down her box that he had obligingly offered to carry for her and was about to attack her in the lonely country district to which he had conducted her. Young and fleetfooted, she easily out-distanced the heavily-built, middle-aged man, and it was the story told by Marie Pichon and, a few days later, the discovery of a body buried in a shallow grave deep in the heart of Montaverne Wood, that set the countryside ablaze.

And now the authorities acted with a vigour that, had it been exercised earlier, would undoubtedly have saved many young lives. Suspicion fixed upon Dumollard and his wife almost at once, for here again the man had never altered his *modus operandi* and there were many who came forward to speak as to seeing the man loitering on the bridge accosting young women. Moreover, the man bore an unenviable reputation among his neighbours by reason of his surly and taciturn manner, and perhaps those neighbours had been waiting for just such an opportunity that now offered. Dumollard and his wife were arrested and, faced

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with the eternal questioning of the police, the woman broke down and told the whole ghastly story that set the official spades to work. Not even Madame Dumollard knew the exact number of the murders committed by her man and neither, it was supposed, did Dumollard himself, to whom a murder more or less was a matter apparently of little moment. But the subsequent search of his farm and the outbuildings brought to light over a thousand articles of feminine wearing apparel such as are worn by the peasant girl class and of these not more than five per cent were identified by the relatives of their owners. The inference is fairly obvious. The precious couple made a poor showing in the dock, each trying to blame the other for the actual killings. Madame was sent to prison for twenty years and her husband to the scaffold to which grim erection, some years previously, his father, likewise a murderer, had preceded him. It is not often that the grave holds its secret for a period as long as that accorded to Martin Dumollard. Euphemia Mozok was, as has been told, allowed three years' respite, Wainwright only one. Dougal of the Moat Farm had four years of comparative immunity from suspicion during which the unfortunate Miss Camille Holland lay buried in the plantation. Bastien's and Robert's garden soil held the law at bay for ten years which must surely constitute something of a record in the history of disposal by burial.

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It is a sordid story, this of Bastien and Robert, a story such as Zola would have loved to write. A family in the rue des Maturins consisting of a widow, a half-witted son and a daughter married to a dissolute and brutal son-in-law: there is fertile soil, here, for tragedy.

Madame Houet was possessed of considerable estate left to her by her late husband and it was this, taken in conjunction with his mother-in-law's robust health, that suggested to Robert that, so far as he was concerned, the good lady would be of far greater use to him dead than living. For by law, on the death of Madame Houet, some thirty thousand francs would pass to her daughter which, according to Robert's way of looking on things financial, meant passing from his wife's pocket into his own. In conversation with his friend Bastien, an unsavoury hanger-on of the Boulevards, the delicate subject of his mother-in-law's demise was at times touched upon and it was Bastien who at last suggested that dreams might possibly be made to come true. If he was promised a substantial slice of the thirty thousand francs then Bastien would help his old friend Robert in every way possible. And so, over a bottle of red wine in their favourite tavern, the bargain was struck and the necessary preliminaries put in hand without further delay.

First a house that had stood empty for some years was rented in the rue Vaugirard, a house to which

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was attached a garden surrounded by high walls and with lawns knee-deep in rank grass and under-growth. Here beneath an old apricot tree the two men dug a grave, working by night and without lights for greater safety. But at that time the rue Vaugirard was a lonely spot, more or less deserted after dark, and there was little danger and so the work was speedily and ably executed. The next step was to invite his mother-in-law to inspect his new house and here Robert excelled himself in exercising a courtesy and politeness that one would have thought Madame Houet would have distrusted. He even went so far as to send Bastien in a carriage to fetch the good lady and it is suggested that he may have hinted at repayment of certain monies borrowed from his accommodating mother-in-law as an additional lure. Be that as it may Madame Houet evidently suspected nothing and accompanied Bastien to the rue Vaugirard where she was promptly strangled and put under-ground beneath the apricot tree. Then Robert and Bastien returned to Paris and to their homes to wait with what patience they could for the news to leak out that Madame Houet had disappeared.

It was not long in coming. Neither was the arrest of Bastien and Robert, who at once fell under suspicion. The lady had been seen entering a carriage in which Bastien had been seated, she was her son-in-law's creditor to a large amount and heir-at-law through his wife to a portion of

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the widow's estate, and it was known that there had been bad blood between them for some time. Opportunity and motive here marched hand in hand. But French law demanded the production of the *corpus delicti* in a charge of murder and here the thugs knew that they were on perfectly safe ground. No one save themselves knew of the house in the rue Vaugirard, so secretly had they gone about their preparations, and the result was as expected. They were acquitted and at once set legal machinery in motion to claim the widow's property. But here they met an irritating opposition from the authorities. Although the police did not put it in so many words it was made perfectly clear to Robert that the only way to collect the money was for them to produce the corpse. Otherwise how were the police to know that the good Madame Houet was dead? And if the lady was not dead, how could they touch her property? Of course everything would be quite all right in the long run, but they would have to wait ten years before the law would admit that the *Veuve Houet* was dead. The authorities were sorry but, well, that was the law.

And so, with the estate of the widow thrown into the French equivalent of Chancery, Robert was faced not only with his own difficulties but with those of his confederate Bastien. It was not long before this latter gentleman began to make himself thoroughly objectionable. He had done his job

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well and it was distinctly hard on him that he should have to wait ten long years for his money. He pointed out to Robert that he might even die in the meantime. After all, business was business. And so Monsieur Bastien set out on the thorny path of blackmail and proceeded to bleed poor Robert white. It was not till the latter reached the final franc of his resources that Bastien played his trump card. At the time of their acquittal the verdict had been that there was nothing against Bastien but that Robert was only released *for the present*. To Bastien's confused thinking this could mean but one thing, that while he himself was immune for ever from re-arrest, Robert could be taken and again charged with the murder of the widow at any time. And, being the sort of man he was, Bastien decided, now that his victim was no longer of the slightest use to him financially, it might be as well to be quit of him altogether. It would at least satisfy the deep hatred he had of his accomplice if he sent him to the guillotine.

So one fine morning Bastien, with his fingers figuratively crossed, walked into the police office and told the whole story of the rue Vaugirard. Quite frankly he admitted his share of the tragedy, making it quite clear that it was Robert who struck the death blow, he told the commissionaire that he himself, having been acquitted of the charge of murdering Madame Houet, was in no danger of being again arrested on the same charge. And

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then, having heard his story, the police said that now they'd tell *him* one. It was sad hearing, that story, for Monsieur Bastien, and it led to the second appearance of the two rascals in the dock. Bastien's indignant protests that they couldn't do a thing like that to an acquitted man met with the contempt they deserved, the authorities being far more concerned with a certain walled garden in the rue Vaugirard than in Bastien's curious misreading of the laws of France.

Then the spade work. There was quite a party in the rue Vaugirard. Monsieur Orfila, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, was there and with him Monsieur Dumontier, a professor of anatomy. The police officials were there and a fair sprinkling of the Municipal Guard. And to complete the party, Robert, securely handcuffed to his old friend Bastien. On a table set out under the branches of the apricot tree there were papers and a plan of the garden. The accused men stood shivering in the sharp air of the April morning as the policemen dug and sounded every yard of the garden. The body of Madame Houet with the strangling cord still about her neck was duly unearthed and it was found just in time for there is, or was at that time, another aspect of the French law with which Bastien and Robert seemed to have been unacquainted and that is that if for ten years a murder is undetected there can be no arrest for that particular crime. So says the Code Napoleon.

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Ten years—Robert's unlucky number, surely, for had the body of the murdered woman lain undiscovered for a few months longer, not only would the murderers have been exempt from arrest but they would have been able to lay their hands on the poor woman's money. Fate certainly turned a pretty trick on the two thugs of the rue Vaugirard when Bastien, in petty spite, denounced his accomplice.

But neither Robert nor Bastien had any call to quarrel with their luck. Not only had they enjoyed nearly ten years of comparative immunity from arrest, but, for some obtuse reason known presumably only to the learned judge who tried the brutes, the killers of Madame Houet were allowed extenuating circumstances and in due course they set out for Devil's Island, Bastien still loudly protesting against his conviction as being a shameful miscarriage of justice.

There must be but few spots on this old earth of ours where human passions have run riot at greater speed and variety than at Cripple Creek. For where gold is, there will be gathered together all the wickedness of mankind. Since the discovery of the heavily laden lodes in 1890 the total value of the yield of the precious metal in Cripple Creek has exceeded seventy million pounds sterling. Fire has at times all but razed the place to the ground, murders have been rife and robberies of everyday occurrence, it has been the scene of

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the greatest gold mining strike in history and during prohibition the surrounding mountainous district of the Rockies was one of the centres for the illicit trade in liquor. And the head of this particular branch of law evasion was one Charlie Neal, ex-convict, racketeer, swindler and all that was bad in a district ever notorious for its bad men. It would have been thought that the police, when the body of a woman was found buried and burned on the mountains in the delectable vicinity of Cripple Creek, would have begun by questioning Charlie Neal, but they do not seem to have done so. In the first place considerable difficulty was encountered in identifying the body, and the authorities were side-tracked to a great extent by the medical report which stated that the victim was a woman of about thirty years of age. As a matter of fact, when identification was at last established, the age was proved to be fifty-five.

In this case the combined action of burial and burning as a means of disposal all but saved the murderer from capture. It seems that his original intention had been to soak the body of the unfortunate Ida Hanson in petrol and destroy it by fire alone, but it is supposed that the leaping flames of his dreadful bonfire scared the man and that he hastily beat out the conflagration he had started and buried what remained of the women in a hastily dug grave. It was the protuberance of one of the victim's legs that pointed to the crime.

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But, bungled as was the disposal of Miss Hanson, it served its purpose to the extent of giving a breathing space to Mr. Neal, for the body was discovered on June 4th, 1933, and Charlie Neal did not face the murder charge till October 19th the following year. The evidence at that trial brought to light an amazing career of crime, for Neal, when he saw that prohibition was about to be repealed, had changed his tactics and had devoted himself mainly to the swindling of widows and spinsters who were possessed of fat banking accounts and susceptible hearts. The pictures of this rascal do not suggest that he was the owner of any great charm but he seemed to have had a way with him sufficiently to serve his purpose. There is little doubt that he had, while engaged in transferring her fortune to his own pockets, promised to marry Miss Hanson. In fact the woman had confided to a mutual friend that she was not yet quite sure whether she would marry Charlie Neal or not.

It is quite possible that Neal's method of disposal might have been entirely successful had he been more careful as to detail. It is the old story of crass stupidity, for not only had the man failed to dig deep enough, but he had buried with the body of his victim a portion of a Paisley shawl, and it was through this article of apparel that identification was at last established. For the shawl had been a family heirloom and at some time in its career

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had been cut in half, one portion being given to Ida and the other retained by another member of the Hanson family. This, and a curious dental formation that is not found in one person in twenty-five thousand, completed the case against Charlie Neal. It may be noted that Neal employed a method of covering up his victim's tracks that may possibly have been borrowed from Patrick Mahon. It will be remembered that the Crumbles murderer caused Miss Kaye to write letters stating her intention of proceeding abroad to get married, and Neal adopted precisely the same method of putting the friends and relations of Ida Hanson off the track. For some time the production of letters, undoubtedly in the dead woman's handwriting and posted after the discovery of her body, held up the identification process, one telegraph message being so worded as to suggest that the woman intended making a prolonged stay in South America.

Although the prevalence of murder in the States may be attributed in part to the comparative simplicity of, at least, temporary disposal, it can also be explained by a reference to the list of names of those who go to the death house. Germans, Serbians, Poles, Italians and Sicilians, these dominate the charge sheets. Almost every other gangster seems to possess an Italian or Sicilian family name, and when one remembers that Sicily and Calabria are, or rather were, the spiritual

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homes of the Mafia and kindred murder societies it is perhaps hardly fair to blame America as a country. We have heard what Euphemia brought with her out of the darkness of Serbia ; now we will deal with Guiseppe Guilino who hailed from Calabria.

Guiseppe lived on a farm in Maryland. He had a large number of children, among them being a youth of eighteen named Vincent who had proved somewhat of a rebel to the strict discipline of parental rule. For Guiseppe considered it the duty of a true Calabrian to rule his house as he wished, demanding unhesitating obedience and loyalty from his offspring. But Calabrian ideas do not thrive upon the soil of free America, and Vincent appears to have been far more American than Calabrian in his outlook. It is small wonder that what had satisfied the emigrant father in the old days failed to satisfy the Americanised son and the few starved acres cultivated by the old man became for Vincent a prison hemming him in and killing all ambition for a fuller life. There was considerable friction and it was during one of the eternal quarrels between father and son that Vincent, losing his temper, seized a cup of scalding coffee and threw it in his father's face. This story was told to the police when, a few days later, one of Vincent's brothers notified them that the boy had packed a suit-case and disappeared without a word of farewell to any of them. Questioning as to the

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outcome of the quarrel during which the coffee throwing incident had taken place, the police were told that old Guiseppe had shown a commendable restraint and had not even raised his hand against his son. It was no doubt due to contrition that the boy had decided to shake from his feet the dust of a home in which he had so disgraced himself and outraged his father's cherished traditions. The police were not very interested. It was an old story ; these things were happening all the time ; sons yearning for a brighter life were flocking from the country into the towns ; daughters were leaving home every day. It was Guiseppe's fault anyway. . . .

They made a cursory examination of the house. Vincent's bedroom was in order and nothing was missing but the suit-case and the boy's clothes. Then, promising that they would send out messages to round up the runaway, they were about to depart when one of the policemen noticed that the daughter of the family was regarding old Guiseppe with what he thought to be horror. A beautiful girl of about Vincent's age, she was standing back in the shadows of the room, her great black eyes fixed on her father's face and there was something in the girl's look that suggested to the officer that she might repay further questioning. Little by little they drew the terrible story from her, a story that fastened suspicion on Guiseppe and he, too, was questioned.

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Old Guiseppe, faced with the evidence against him, made no effort to conceal his crime. Almost he gloried in the fact that he had upheld the ancient law of Calabria by which a son who dares to raise his hand against the author of his being is not allowed to live. He had raised neither hand nor voice during the quarrel with Vincent, but his heart had been full to overflowing at the boy's affront to authority. When darkness fell he had gone to a lonely spot on his farm and there he had calmly dug a grave in readiness for his son. Then with a sledge hammer he had battered the boy's head in while he slept and carried the body in a wheelbarrow to the place of burial. Once again earth had been called in to aid a killing. Under the supervision of the police the old Calabrian himself was forced to dig up the body of the murdered boy and reconstruct his hideous crime. That the murder could have been committed without the knowledge of others in the house is unthinkable, but it was proved that the children had been cowed into silence by the example of parental discipline they had witnessed and were, no doubt, scared that they themselves might suffer a like fate. Guiseppe faced his judges in due course and was sentenced to eighteen years in Maryland Penitentiary, a sentence that he failed entirely to understand. Surely he, a good Calabrian, had the right to carry out his country's primitive law, a right to administer that law to his own children.

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Like Bastien, old Guiseppe, considered his incarceration to be a gross miscarriage of justice.

A somewhat similar case was that of Wienchowski. Here again we have the picture of youthful America growing up side by side with age-old European traditions. Joseph Wienchowski farmed a few acres in Northern Michigan and the small frame house with its huddle of half-ruined outbuildings was to him his whole world, a world with which he was perfectly content and with which he expected his family to be equally satisfied. Joseph's second wife, a Polish woman who could speak no English, could hardly be expected to make the place ideally homelike for her seventeen-year-old stepson Gregory, American-bred and educated, who, by the way, is said to have been a headstrong youth with a craving for the larger and more spacious world that lay beyond the rail fence of his father's farm.

There were between father and son many instances of quarrels more or less bitter, but no thought of tragedy hovered over the home of the Wienchowskis. Joseph was well enough liked, and Gregory was regarded as being just another of the youngsters kicking their heels around after the day's work was done, loafing through the woodlands, dreaming their dreams and beating against the bars of their prison homes.

And then, on a March morning in 1935, Gregory was found dead, half submerged in a ditch in the heart of the forest. The body was taken to the

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morgue and the police visited the Wienchowski farm to glean what information they could as to Gregory's movements prior to his death. That the boy had been brutally murdered admitted of no doubt. The children could tell nothing, for they were only youngsters, the Polish mother could, as has been said, speak no English, and the father, although he expressed his willingness to assist the police in every way, was not very helpful. Gregory had finished his work on the farm, Joseph said, and had then gone out but he had not volunteered to say where he was going. But if Joseph was not helpful he was quite ready to give his opinions for what they might be worth. Maybe, he said, his son had been run over by a car and knocked senseless into the ditch, maybe he had been robbed. . . .

One by one these suggestions were eliminated from the enquiry. Who would trouble to rob a boy who had never been known to carry more than a few cents on him, grudgingly doled out to him by his frugal parent? And if he had been knocked into the ditch after a motor-car accident surely he would have breathed for a little while. But there was no sign of water having entered the lungs. And then it became quite obvious to the police that Joseph Wienchowski was lying on several points on which he had been questioned. Till then, no suspicion had attached to the man, but now questioning became grilling, and deeper

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and deeper into the mire of deceit sank the Polish emigrant. There was a little matter of a mortgage on the farm and an insurance on Gregory's life that would more than clear it. There were certain marks in the barn and in the cart which Wienchowski used in his business that might be, as Joseph said they were, stains of pigs blood, but then again they might not. The grilling increased in intensity as the police saw the man weakening.

He was taken to the morgue again and again to view the body of his murdered son and on the occasion of the visit that was to wring from him his confession, he was handed a gardening fork and asked to see for himself if the prongs of the fork did not fit in strangely with the wounds on the boy's head. It was too much for Joseph Wienchowski. He threw the fork from him and buried his face in his hands. Then, brokenly between sobs, he told his story. It was a story very similar to that told by Guiseppe, a quarrel between father and son, abuses and recriminations. Joseph swore that the first threat of violence came from Gregory, and that in taking up a hammer that lay ready to hand the elder man had acted only on the defensive. It was then, the father said, that Gregory attacked him with the gardening fork. At that Joseph had applied the hammer to good effect, raining blow after blow on the boy's head till he fell. Then, to make sure, the father had given the *coup de grâce* with the fork that had fallen from his son's hands.

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For a whole day the body had lain in the barn and then, under cover of night, Joseph had taken it in his cart to the forest and deposited it in the half-filled ditch. He told the police that he had offered up a little prayer at the side of his dead son and had then driven back to the farm. A week of liberty was all that concealment of the body allowed to Joseph Wienchowski. For the rest of his life he will be but a number in Jackson State Prison.

And on a par with the sordid stories of the Pole and the Calabrian is that of the Italian. Listen to the story of Antonetta and Raimondo. Although the very names set one thinking of medieval lovers, of Aucassin and Nicolette, Paolo and Francesca, there is little romance in the sordid story of love and murder that is here told to illustrate still further the superstition that has been imported into America through the agency of her immigrants. If for New York we substitute the crooked alley-ways of Florence, if for "Hoboken Kitty" we substitute Messer Corvinus or any of the merchants who plied a trade in poisons and love philtres in the days of ancient Italy, if for the thugs "Dutch" and MacNamara we picture two cloaked assassins lurking in a Florentine arcade we have a far more fitting background for the tragedy of Gregorio.

For when the passionate love of Antonetta for her young man lodger Vito Raimondo had grown beyond control the couple thought at first of

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eliminating the unwanted husband by means of witchcraft, in which they appear to have had a firm and unswerving faith. First Vito melted down a small wad of cobbler's wax and fashioned it into a clumsy impersonation of Antonetta's spouse, Gregorio. Then through the heart of this waxen image he pierced a sharp needle, placed the wax in a safe place to cool and hoped for the best. But whatever this childish method may have meant to Antonetta's forebears in Naples, or Milan, or what-not, it certainly fell woefully short of expectations in the prosaic surroundings of New York City. But, undaunted at her failure, Antonetta sought out a fortuneteller, who for a cash payment of five dollars raised the lovers' hopes by recommending a somewhat repellent concoction of herbs to which must be added four paws taken from a black cat. This was to be placed beneath the doorstep of her home, a doorstep over which Gregorio must pass many times a day. But the only sufferer from this new treatment would appear to have been the unfortunate animal who had had the bad luck to fall in Antonetta's way. It was only after the lamentable failure of these comparatively harmless methods that Vito, becoming impatient, decided on more stringent action.

And so enters into the drama the soothsayer of medieval Italy in the person of " Hoboken Kitty " an unspeakable female to whom a spot of murder

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was neither here nor there. If any person was to be removed then Kitty was the lady to come to for prompt attention to business and no questions asked. Kitty had her price, of course, and the payment for the removing of Gregorio was fixed at five hundred dollars. But poor Vito simply had not got the money and he protested loudly and long at this extortion. But, as "Hoboken Kitty" pointed out, five hundred dollars was a small sum to pay for the risk of sizzling in the hot seat up at Sing Sing. Besides, there were the actual assassins to pay, for Kitty was not disposed to perform her dirty work with her own fair hands. And well, really, if Vito couldn't get together the money then Kitty regretted that he would have to take his business elsewhere. But at last a contract was drawn up agreeing that Kitty should be paid out of the insurance money that would fall to Antonetta when Gregorio should be no more. Kitty and the two slayers would then present their accounts and everybody would be satisfied.

And now, to slow music, the stage is set for the entrance of Lorenzo and Mario—in other words Bill MacNamara and a thug known as "Dutch." The murder itself was a simple matter. Gregorio was enticed to a lonely road and despatched by dagger thrusts and blackjack. A most carefully arranged plan by which the crime could not possibly be brought home to Antonetta melted away before the questioning of the police as would have melted

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poor Gregorio's waxen image before a furnace. "Hoboken Kitty" was grilled for hours and at last told her story. After that, but why enlarge on the inevitable denouement? Antonetta, Kitty and Raimondo went off for twenty years seclusion behind bars; Bill MacNamara side-stepped the electric chair by the skin of his teeth and escaped with a lifer. The only one who could afford to laugh is the mysterious "Dutch" who, by the way, has never yet put in a claim for his money. No doubt "Dutch" has long ago written off the amount as a bad debt.

The case of Antonetta does not come under the heading of Disposal by Burial, but perhaps a little divergence may be allowed here. It is difficult, if ones does not study the American newspapers, to appreciate the primitive outlook of Guiseppe and Joseph and Antonetta. But one has only to go back a few miles out of New York to come upon communities where superstition reigns and where witchcraft is by no means ruled out of everyday existence. To gather something of the mentality of Guiseppe Guilino one has not to look much further than Albert Yashinsky of Pennsylvania and the "Hex" killers. Albert, a taxi-driver, by this time has either been sent to the electric chair or to the Fairview Hospital for the Insane. The last reports were that he was sitting quite at ease in his cell in Schuykill County Gaol reading his Bible and receiving visitors among whom was his sweetheart,

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the pretty nineteen-year-old Selina Bernstel who, by the way, was quite ready to accompany Albert to the altar. Albert's crime was the removing by means of direct action the " Hex " that had been placed on him by old Sus Mummey. And not alone Albert, but his friends, Drumheller and Stauffer, both miners in Pennsylvanian coal-fields, had long been under the spell of this pernicious old lady. Albert had put his case before a coloured doctor—whose ancestors no doubt practised voodoo in the hearts of African jungles—who had told him that there was no doubt that he and his friends were being " hexed " and that everything pointed to Mrs. Mummey being the cause of all the trouble. And had not the Bible taught Albert that there was no crime in ridding the community of such an one? Did it not say in Exodus xi. 18 : " Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live " ?

So Albert, we will hope reluctantly, albeit with a keen sense of duty, took down his gun, loaded it, and proceeded to the cottage where the old lady lived alone, and through the open window sighted a careful bead and sent two ounces of lead into Mrs. Mummey's heart. Then he returned home convinced that he had done his one good deed of the day, a conviction that was, needless to say, shared by Mr. Drumheller and Mr. Stauffer. Albert Yashinsky had, in his own opinion and in theirs, performed a public service.

But the Pennsylvanian police had other ideas

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on the matter and much to his chagrin Yashinski was arrested and charged with murder. *Murder*, when he had merely been carrying out Biblical orders and ridding the neighbourhood of a menace. Albert could no more understand why this should happen to him than Guiseppe could understand why he should be sent to Maryland Penitentiary or Bastien why he should be sent to Devil's Island.

Fantastic, you will say, unbelievable in this twentieth century. Atavism? Heredity? Perhaps, all unknown to himself, the blood of one of the old Pilgrim Fathers runs red in Albert's veins, maybe he and his friends are direct descendants of the emigrants of the *Mayflower*, those stern old Puritans to whom the devil was every bit as personal as their God. The records of the trials at Salem in the seventeenth century differ not so very greatly from the trial of Yashinsky in the twentieth. Listen to what his friend Drumheller says: "I was hexed for a whole summer and after a time found out Sus Mumney had put the spell on me. My head got all funny and I couldn't stay in the house. I had to run out in the bushes all the time. Then I heard about the pow-wow man over in Hazelton and I asked him who put the spell on me but he wouldn't say. That was the same man Albert went to and who told him it was old Sus Mumney." Stauffer is even more fantastic for he says that old Sus hexed him with a jar that had

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in it three newly-born pigs which she kept down in her cellar. Stauffer began to feel prickly all over he says, when he saw the pigs and went into a trance like Albert used to do. Then old Sus began coming to him at night. He'd wake up and find her leaning over his bed with the face of a black cat, and the cat would spit at him. Not so very far removed from the Salem trial where Baxter spoke of a parson "eighty years old who after being kept awake five days and nights confessed his dealings with the devil."

Meanwhile Albert's taxi is wanting a driver and Guiseppe is wondering what has happened to him in his Maryland cell. Both American citizens living under modern laws and conditions in a world of telephones and aeroplanes and radio, and deep in their hearts, ineradicably rooted, the sinister beliefs and traditions of the past. Age-old gods stirring uneasily in their sleep.

And yet I wonder whether we are not calling the kettle black considering that it was less than three hundred years ago that the unspeakable Matthew Hopkins travelled through the villages of this England of ours leaving behind him a trail of death and misery that could hardly have been equalled in sadistic brutality by Judge Jeffreys himself in the West Country. For at that time the belief in witchcraft was rife throughout the land, an old woman had but to have a bent back, a wizened face and toothless gums to be accused of being the

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cause of all the evils from which the neighbourhood might be suffering. Poor old Sus Mumney was merely born a few hundred years too late and no doubt in Hopkins's day the old dame would have been put to the tests with which the witch-finder smelt out his victims as the witch-doctors smell out theirs in the jungles of darkest Africa.

Not that the tests would have given Sus Mumney so peaceful an end as Yashinsky's bullet. For if she had been thrown into the village pond and had sunk, she would have suffered all the agonies of drowning, if she had floated she would have been burnt alive. If, on being pricked with a pin, old Sus had shown no signs of pain she would have been adjudged guilty. If she had screamed—well, no doubt the resourceful Matthew Hopkins would have found some other test by which he could satisfy his blood lust. When one considers that our own law courts tried some of these sorcery cases there is little cause to point the finger of scorn at the Salem trials and poor Albert Yashinsky. But it is pleasant to be able to record that Matthew fell a victim to his own tests, being half drowned and then completely hanged by an infuriated crowd of villagers in August 1647.

A man after Matthew Hopkins's own heart was Tomo the Baptist or the "Black Christ" of Rhodesia. Like Matthew in England, Tomo would tour the kraals and villages of Africa smelling out witches but adding a new angle to the old practice

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by using the recently introduced Christianity as a foil for his ghastly work. Perhaps, as with Yaskinsky, Tomo had been told of the words in Exodus and considered that he was doing a fine thing in smelling out witches and destroying them, but we have our doubts regarding Tomo. In company with a converted native chief named Sharwillia he would arrange huge baptism parties at night in the local river and at the end of these orgies most of the converts would be found drowned. It is supposed that both Tomo and the chief were actuated to a great extent in their choice of victims by the material circumstances of the accused. Sharwillia's enemies were baptised in large numbers and, Tomo's fame spreading, he was requested by other chiefs to perform a like service in their own territories. How many murders Tomo committed will never be known. He, like Matthew Hopkins, was duly hanged.

Dr. John Webster in his book *Witchcraft and the Supernatural* writes of a famous case that was tried before Mr. Justice Davenport and which shows that in the time of Matthew Hopkins the occult was widely believed in and acted upon even in cases where life and death hung in the balance. The worthy doctor says : " I confess the Walker case to be one of the most convincing stories, being of undoubted verity, that I ever read, heard or knew of and carries with it the most evident force to make the most incredulous spirit to be satisfied

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that there are really sometimes such things as apparitions."

Anne Walker, a young girl, lived under the care of her kinsman, John Walker, a widower, and when it became evident that Anne was about to bear a child, John, to hide her shame—and incidentally, it was suggested, his own—decided that the girl should be sent away till after her confinement. This being known to the neighbourhood nothing was thought to be amiss when John's friend, Mark Sharp, a miner, took Anne away to the temporary home that had been provided for her. Anne and her trouble were in fact forgotten when a certain miller, grinding corn in his mill some two miles from the Walker house, saw what he described as the ghost of Anne Walker, appear suddenly before him. The girl was deathly white and on her head and breasts were five deep wounds to which the apparition called the attention of the miller, Mr. James Graham. Graham was badly scared, as may well be believed, but he decided that it had been fancy and that he had better say nothing. Then the apparition appeared once more in the same spot and at the same hour, and the story it told was the same in every detail with that told on its first appearance.

The story which Graham told at the trial was as follows. The ghost of Anne Walker had said : "I was one night late sent away with one Mark Sharp who upon a moor slew me with a pick such

as men dig coal with and gave me these five wounds and after buried my body in a coal pit hard by and hid the pick under a bush and his shoes and stockings being bloody he endeavoured to wash them but seeing the blood would not part he hid them there."

Graham by this time knew himself to be haunted—or “hexed” as Albert Yashinsky would have said—and decided to take his story to the police. The apparition had named the exact spot on the moor where the tragedy had been enacted and a search was at once instituted and the body of poor Anne found exactly as described. There were the five wounds, the coal pick, the bloody shoes and stockings. John Walker and Mark Sharp were at once arrested and put on trial at the Assizes. Naturally the story of the apparition was received with the proverbial grain of salt and it was broadly suggested that Graham was aware, of his own knowledge, of the tragedy on the moor. But the miller had no possible motive for murdering a girl he did not even know and he had no difficulty in clearing his name. John Walker and Mark Sharp were duly hanged by the neck till they were dead.

And that is an authentic case in this England of ours as Albert Yashinsky’s is an authentic case on the other side of the Atlantic. But nearly three hundred years separate them.

## CHAPTER II

### DISPOSAL BY DISMEMBERMENT

ONE can hardly picture a worse fate for even the most callous of murderers than that they should be doomed throughout eternity to carry with them portions of their victims, seeking resting-places for their grim burden and finding none. One has but to imagine the scenes endured by those who have sought by dismemberment to secure safety from the rope to appreciate the stark horror of this particular form of disposal, the dream terrors that must follow in its wake.

A cellar in Hilldrop Crescent and a little spectacled elderly man bending low over the remains of what had once been a woman. Carefully and with considerable medical skill Harley Crippen goes methodically about his gruesome task. All the misery, the utter hopelessness of his life with Cora Crippen has passed from him, his deed has been committed and there is a curious sense of peace of mind over him as he meticulously prepares his victim for burial. His agonies are yet to come. He must be very, very careful, for no vestige of his work must be left unhidden. The instruments he

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has used must be scrupulously cleansed and returned each to its place, any stains on floor or walls must be painstakingly removed. And yet Harley Crippen, like so many of his kind that have gone before, makes his great mistake and actually wraps up certain of his dreadful parcels in his own pyjama jackets, garments bearing the tab of a local hosier by which its purchaser can at once be traced. He fails also to obliterate an old scar resultant from an operation performed on his wife long ago and so, careful as he has been, Crippen leaves wide open two doors leading straight into the execution shed.

We see a room in Soho, and a slaughterman dismembering a lady who has become somewhat of a thorn in his side. It is a grey November dawn in the year 1917 and to add to the horror there is in progress an air raid over London. We see a bungalow on the Crumbles at Eastbourne, a locked room, a week-end in which love and death are curiously intermingled ; the shack of a Crowborough chicken farm where, by the dim ochre light of an oil lamp, Norman Thorne goes about his sinister work ; a sumptuous flat in Monte Carlo and two adventurers packing their ghastly baggage for a trip to Marseilles ; Gabrielle Bompard and Eyraud in the rue Tronson Ducoudray ; Greenacre riding in a crowded omnibus with the head of Hannah Brown in a parcel on his lap. Ruxton driving through the night in the car containing the ghastly burden designed for the Scottish ravine . . .

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The distribution of the remains of a victim over a large area must necessarily increase the difficulties of identification and heighten the chances of a murderer's escape. But few succeed. Mahon, Crippen, Kate Webster : all trapped. But perhaps the most perfect example is the celebrated Voirbo murder in which Gustave Macé, the eminent French detective, won undying laurels. Voirbo was an efficient worker and in disposing of the remains of old Père Bodasse he went about his task methodically and with scrupulous attention to detail. Not for one moment did he lose his nerve. The head he filled with molten lead and sank deep in the waters of the Seine. Portions of the unfortunate old gentleman were cut up into minute pieces and strewn at night from the river-banks. The legs, which proved the ultimate means of his being arrested, he wrapped up in stiff cloth, securely sewn with stout string and deposited very inconsiderately in the well from which a certain restaurant in the rue Princesse drew the drinking water for its clientele. It was Monsieur Lampon, the proprietor of this ill-starred eating-house, who, having received complaints regarding the taste of the water served at his tables, determined on making a search of the well to discover the cause of the slightly acrid taste that was certainly apparent in the contents of the carafes he himself had tested.

It took but few moments for Monsieur Lampon to know that the complaints of his guests were fully

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justified and his own keenness of taste verified. Also it must have come to the unfortunate man that, except from the standpoint of a show-place for the morbid-minded, his restaurant was doomed. For by means of a hook attached to a long pole the restaurateur drew up a bundle, water-logged and malodorous, from which protruded a portion of what looked uncommonly like human flesh. Further experiments with the pole and hook brought to light another parcel, and when the police had been summoned and the stitches cut, two human legs in an advanced state of decomposition were disclosed to the horrified sight of Monsieur Lampon. Gustave Macé, the young and enthusiastic Commissary of Police, at once took charge and his investigations showed him that the stitches on the parcels had been made by someone who was accustomed to wielding a needle : stitches such as might have been made by a tailor. So, beginning at the rue Princesse house, Monsieur Macé started a hunt for likely tailors. The investigations, apart from this, proceeded on approved lines. While his agents were rounding up the tailors Macé devoted himself to the work of establishing the identity of the victim. Here, as in most dismemberment cases, he was faced with a huge task. There were at that particular time no less than eighty-four missing women in France and by a process of elimination and the exercise of an infinite patience, Macé accounted for them all, or rather proved to

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his own satisfaction that the two legs in his possession were the property of none of them. And then it was Old Jules, the attendant at the Morgue, a grisly old fellow who had had in his time many thousands of corpses through his hands, who pointed out that, in his opinion, the legs were those of a man and not a woman. He was right, for what Old Jules did not know about corpses was hardly worth knowing. Monsieur Macé was faced with still another difficult line of investigation.

Before approaching the task of accounting for all the missing men in France one of Macé's agents came to him with encouraging news. There were, they had discovered, no tailors lodging in the rue Princesse house, but at one time there had dwelt in a room at the top of the stairs a pretty little blonde who had abandoned her occupation as seamstress for the brighter life of the cabarets and was now delighting her audiences nightly at a small music hall in the neighbourhood, *Le Cochon Mort*. And among the tailors who had from time to time brought the ex-seamstress work to finish had been a man named Voirbo. He had apparently become attracted to the little lady, for he had paid her such small courtesies as drawing water for her from the common well and carrying it up to her room on the third floor. Moreover, Monsieur Voirbo was a constant attendant at the music hall where the lady was now appearing.

Good, said Monsieur Macé, and got busy. He

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ascertained that Voirbo had until recently on many of his visits to the Cochon Mort been accompanied by an elderly gentleman named Bodasse but that lately he had frequented the resort alone, and enquiries among those who knew the old man elicited the fact that Bodasse had not been seen for some time in any of his other haunts. The only exception was the concierge of Bodasse's lodgings who swore that, although he had not actually seen his lodger, there had been a light each night in his room and he had heard him at his usual time pass his little hutch at the entrance on his way up to bed. He knew it was Bodasse, he said, because he had dragged his walking-stick as he went up the stairs.

Macé was not satisfied. Getting no reply to his knock, he burst in the door of Bodasse's lodging. The room was found to have been ransacked and dust lay thick on everything. Macé made a minute examination. On the table were signs that the candle had burnt in its own grease and on the mantelpiece there was a box containing one unused candle. The number of dead matches on the floor was found to be exactly one short of the original number of candles that the box would have held when full. Clearly someone had been in the room every night for eleven nights, which, curiously enough, was about the number of days since the last time Bodasse had been seen at Le Cochon Mort. Macé thought it now high time that Voirbo, if not

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actually arrested, should at least be asked to account for his movements and to give an explanation regarding his old friend Bodasse.

But Voirbo was quite prepared for the summons that came to him from the *Sûreté* and ready with his story. They could not accuse him of any crime, he pointed out. But when, as they do in France, he was taken to a certain room where, in Macé's opinion, the crime had been committed, the accused sang a very different tune. Seeing that the detective had filled a jug with water and was about to pour it out on the tiled floor of the room, Voirbo registered terror, and confession followed in due course. For, noting the unevenness of the flooring, Macé had thought that if blood had been shed it would have taken some definite course and that water or any other fluid would show him exactly what that course had been. There were no signs of blood on the walls or on the floor, but that was not enough for the detective, who had observed signs that a general cleaning had been in progress. As he poured the water from the jug he watched it trickle slowly across the floor and form a pool where it sloped towards the bed, and here Macé gave instructions that the tiles should be levered up out of their settings. Beneath them, dried and yet quite unmistakable, were signs of what later analysis proved to be human blood. Little dried, black-red flakes that explained the disappearance of Père Bodasse and sealed the fate of Monsieur Voirbo.

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But that fate was not to be the knife-blade of the guillotine. The man's end was peculiarly French. Voirbo, among other activities, had once held a minor position in the Secret Service of the Government and, no doubt with the idea of sealing the lips of a man who knew too much, the authorities smuggled a razor into his cell and hoped for the best. And the curious thing is, that anyone who was coward enough to beat out the life of an old man with a tailoring iron should possess the pluck to use that razor-blade.

The assembling of the evidence in the Voirbo case is only equalled by the medical skill in assembling the portions of the body of Désiré Bodasse. Monsieur Macé of the Sûreté and Old Jules of the Morgue share the honours.

Of all the effigies in the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's none surely bears so sinister an aspect as the lady named Catherine Lawler who there carved for herself a niche under the alias of Kate Webster. This young person, after a short but lurid period of crime and depravity in Liverpool, migrated to London where she resumed her chosen career and, crime not being found to pay as handsomely as she had been led to hope and finding the streets paved with anything but gold, went into domestic service. There can be little doubt that the decision to do so was arrived at more by reason of possible opportunities of larceny and perhaps blackmail that might accompany it than from

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any desire to relieve the domestic servant problem.

The unfortunate woman who secured the services of this atrocious female was a certain Mrs. Thomas, a frail elderly widow possessed of a small income and a pleasant little house at Richmond in which, to supplement her slender means, she let one of her rooms furnished to single gentlemen. Kate's entry into the Richmond household inaugurated for poor Mrs. Thomas a veritable reign of terror, for from the moment that Kate set foot within the door of Vine Cottage she was hardly able to call her soul her own. Even the lodger refused to stay longer in a house with the loud-voiced Irish harridan, and it is this fact that no doubt presented Kate with the opportunity for which she had been waiting, that of finding herself alone with her employer. By a curious coincidence the lodger departed the very day upon which Mrs. Thomas, either from fear of being left alone with the Irish-woman or from motives of economy, had summoned up courage to give Kate Webster notice to leave her employ, a notification that Kate took extremely ill.

The woman acted with the cool deliberation of the born criminal. Mrs. Thomas was attacked, it is thought with an axe, and the body promptly dismembered and dispersed, a box containing the main portions of the poor lady's anatomy being dropped over the parapet of Richmond Bridge and

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various other portions burnt in the copper fire or hidden in a kitchen garden in the neighbourhood. The head of the unfortunate Mrs. Thomas has not yet been found and, as the murder took place some sixty years ago, the chances of its reappearance are to say the least remote. The murder committed, Kate at once looked about her, seeking a means by which she could turn her fiendish crime into ready cash, before shaking the dust of Richmond from her feet and seeking pastures new. Posing as her own victim, Mrs. Thomas, she enlisted the assistance of others in disposing of the furniture of Vine Cottage to the best advantage. A public auction being in her opinion merely begging trouble, a local dealer agreed to buy for cash the contents of the cottage, lock, stock and barrel, and the effects were duly packed up and carried out to the purchaser's waiting van. It was then that a lady living in the next cottage parted the curtains of her sitting-room window and wondered, as next-door neighbours will wonder, where Mrs. Thomas was moving to. Wondered, too, why Mrs. Thomas, with whom she was on very friendly terms, had not thought to acquaint her of the fact and then, with a premonition of something dreadful, wondered what had happened to Mrs. Thomas herself. Moreover, the neighbour remembered that the day before she had been forced to close her windows at the back of the house on account of the dense and evil-smelling volumes of steam and smoke that came

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from Mrs. Thomas's copper. All of which were vaguely disturbing to the good lady next door.

Neighbour-like, the lady walked down her garden path and enquired of Kate, who was standing at the gate superintending the removals, where her mistress was moving to, a question which was clearly resented by Miss Webster. Instead of answering civilly, Kate became abusive, told her luridly to mind her own business and hurried on the proceedings, and it was only after the vans had driven away that the neighbour recovered from her wonderment, or perhaps her fear of the virago, sufficiently to voice her suspicions that all was not right with Mrs. Thomas. The police were sent for and the discoveries in the kitchen of the cottage quickly changed suspicion into certainty.

The place was a shambles. Of Kate Webster there was no sign but the trail she had left behind her was so obvious that it took the law but a day or two to locate her in her native Ireland and bring her back to face her trial. The box containing the dismembered Mrs. Thomas was almost immediately washed up on the foreshore close to the bridge and duly picked up, and altogether the evidence, in spite of the head remaining hidden, was so conclusive that it seemed but a waste of public time and money to send the murderer for trial. But to the Old Bailey she went and had, moreover, the benefit of two distinguished counsel but, as can be readily seen, their task was altogether beyond

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their forensic skill. Miss Webster was sentenced to death, made a full confession, vainly attempted to postpone the evil day of execution by falsely stating that she was about to become a mother, and was duly hanged at Wandsworth Gaol.

Her efforts at disposal were utterly futile, and Mrs. Thomas from the moment of her death held Kate Webster in the hollow of her hand as firmly as Kate Webster had previously held her mistress. One wonders at the mentality of these killers who, after nerving themselves to their grim tasks, make such stupid mistakes as were made by Kate Webster and Henry Wainwright, for both of these idiots in carrying their dreadful parcels about the Metropolis drew attention to them by enlisting the services of others. Wainwright, as has been told, hired a boy to mind what was left of Harriet Lane and to help him place the parcels in his cab. Kate Webster enlisted the services of a boy named Porter to assist her in carrying the box to Richmond Bridge. Both of these boys helped their employers along the path to the gallows.

A case of dismemberment in which there is a certain similarity to both the Voirbo and Wainwright murders is told by Sir Cecil Walsh in one of his volumes dealing with Indian crime. A certain wealthy Indian gentleman, Kalyan Singh, having to leave home on a journey, requested his servant Bhagwati to make a point of sleeping in

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the hallway of his house to act as a protection for the wife he was leaving behind him, Janki Kuer. Janki seems to have been somewhat of an advanced type of Indian womanhood and not too greatly hampered by the traditions of her caste and there can be little doubt but that during the absences of her lawful spouse Janki thought nothing of relieving the monotony of her lonely state by receiving visits from a gentleman named Bisham Singh, who would saddle his steed and, in approved romantic manner, ride over to his lady's bower from his home in a neighbouring village. It may be that Kalyan Singh had some suspicion as to the way his wife spent her time and this would perhaps explain his definite instructions to the servant Bhagwati.

But shortly after the departure of the master of the house Bhagwati mysteriously disappeared. The husband on his return found the house deserted save for a couple of servants, his wife having decided to go and stay with her mother. Kalyan Singh, lonely in his turn, followed her, and for the moment nothing was said about the disappearance of Bhagwati. But rumours began to circulate in the bazaars and at last Bhagwati's brother considered it his duty to make enquiries. His first interview was with Sundar, a fellow servant of Bhagwati's. Sundar's answers were far from satisfactory. He at first told the brother that Bhagwati had gone overseas to France to fight for the King Emperor in the Great War, but when it was pointed out that

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he had apparently departed on his heroic mission without beating of drums and without saying a word to anybody and that he had taken with him none of his possessions, Sundar considered it about time to change his story. Bhagwati, he then said, had allowed himself to be inveigled into a passionate intrigue with a woman and, despite the fact that he had two wives living at the time, had decided to go away with a new love. This Indian love lyric was believed no more than the fiction of the Great War.

It was then that the brother traced certain of Bhagwati's possessions to a loafer around the bazaars, an "untouchable" or low caste native named Jhoku, and thought it incumbent upon him to inform the police of his suspicions. Authority acted at once and Jhoku, detained and questioned, led the officials to a shed on the outskirts of the town where he said they would find what was left of the unfortunate Bhagwati. There was nobody to be found but there were certain olfactory evidences that, in a marked and extremely unpleasant manner, bore out Jhoku's story. Evidently the body had been accorded at least a temporary resting-place in the shed and, like Wainwright, the murderer had later decided upon removal.

Gradually the net tightened around the household of Kalyan Singh. Jhoku then told his story. He had been called to the house, he said, and had been taken to an upper room where the body of

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Bhagwati was in the process of being dismembered under the personal supervision of the charming Janki Kuer. As an untouchable he had been commandeered to assist, as only one of his low caste could handle the removal of a corpse without fear of eternal punishment. He had taken the body to the shed and buried it. Then he had returned to the house and thoroughly washed and scrubbed the floor. Here it may be mentioned that had the inspector of police possessed the detective sense of Monsieur Macé the tiles might have been dug out and traces of dried blood discovered as in the Voirbo case. But this apparently was not thought of. And, then, said Jhoku, when everything was nice and clean Janki had packed up and gone to stay with mother. It was only on the arrival of the inspector of police that it had been decided to remove the body and seek a more secure disposal. This had been accomplished by burning, and Jhoku was quite willing to show the police the spot where the incineration had taken place. They found a few charred bones and remains of sacking but that was all, certainly not sufficient for identification.

It was a good story, as stories go, but the judge, when Janki came to trial, considered it not quite good enough and the accused lady was courteously given the benefit of the doubt. Kalyan Singh stood by his wife like the gentleman he was and Bisham Singh admitted to a mild flirtation with Janki, but that was all. How these three settled

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any little dispute that might arise out of the proceedings of the trial is nobody's business. Bhagwati has not yet been avenged. Nor, by the way, has he returned from the Great War.

### II

One of the most curious cases of dismemberment occurred in Jasper County, Mississippi, quite recently. Here it was the dog of a rabbit hunter who gave the first notice of the atrocious crime for which two people were subsequently put on their trial. The dog's discovery of two mysterious-looking parcels deposited in the brushwood by the side of a country lane brought the police quickly to the spot and from investigations it was seen that a car had recently been driven on to the road verge and had become bogged deeply in the miry ground. Traces of the efforts that had been made to release the wheels from the bog were plainly to be seen and it was soon brought to light that a young woman driving a red sports car had been seen on the road and a garage proprietor came forward with the information that he had been called to the spot with his breakdown gear and that he had pulled out just such a car from the mire at that spot. Moreover, the garage man knew to whom the car belonged, a woman named Ouida Keeton who lived on the outskirts of the town with her mother, a woman of middle age who, it appeared,

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when enquiries were instituted, had not been seen about the district for some days. Now Miss Ouida Keeton was a very popular girl in the community and the police officers hesitated before venturing to question her personally. But questioned she had to be and after telling a preposterous story about her mother being away on a visit to New Orleans to see her other daughter, a silly story which was disproved by telephone almost before it was told, Ouida gave an entirely new version of her mother's fate :

“ Mother and I left the house early Monday morning,” she said, “ to get some cleaning fluid. We planned to scrub the floors in her room. North of Sandersville we stopped for an old lady who was walking along the highway. She wore a bonnet. We took her into the car. We had not gone far when I heard her say : ‘ You’re the woman that has all the money, aren’t you ? ’ I looked away from the road for a moment. The old woman was pressing a gun against my mother’s side. The woman looked at me, said : ‘ Turn up the next side road.’ I was blindfolded. I heard two men talking. One of them said to me : ‘ We’re kidnapping your mother. You can get her release by returning home and obtaining five thousand dollars in bonds as ransom. They told me where to hide it in the woods. I walked to the main highway, got a lift into town, and obtained the bonds, putting them in the designated spot. I received

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word that my mother would not be released immediately. They said they intended taking her to New Orleans and releasing her there after cashing the bonds. They disappeared with my mother, leaving my car stuck at the side of the road. I've heard nothing from them since. They threatened to kill my mother if I mentioned a word about what happened."

But by this time the police were beginning to lose any sympathy they might have felt for the girl, and as each part and portion of her story was given the direct lie they faced her with certain facts they had discovered. How, if the story of the kidnapping were true, was it that a parcel containing portions of her dead mother's legs had been found not many yards from the spot where her red sports car had become bogged? Why had the tiles in one of the bedrooms of her house been newly painted? How was it that she was possessed of a gun? Why had the floor of the room with the newly-painted tiles been so scrupulously scrubbed?

At last came an entirely new story. In this the girl implicated an elderly man in whose employment she had once been and whom she accused of having seduced her. This, as well as the murder, was stoutly denied by the gentleman in question, but there were many things that he found considerable difficulty in explaining. The girl, in accusing him, had told the police that the man had established an alibi, which she described

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in detail, so as to save himself from accusation and on being questioned he gave precisely the answers that the girl had predicted, which was a curious coincidence anyway. This man, she said, had murdered her mother so that the family might enjoy greater freedom of action, and the hiding in the woods of the leg portions of the cadaver had been entrusted to her as her share of the task of disposal. She had tried to lift them on to the parapet of one of the bridges over the river, but had been unable to do so and so had deposited them in the brushwood only to find on returning from her grim errand that her car wheels had sunk into the soft ground, thereby establishing her presence at the spot and her apparent connection with the crime. There were undoubted signs that parts of the murdered woman's anatomy had been burnt in the grate at the girl's home, and the continual running of the bath water suggested another means by which evidence could have been destroyed. But the remaining portions of poor Mrs. Keeton were never found and although in this case fire, water, dismemberment and concealment were all employed, it was the latter that brought the crime to the notice of the police. There is no doubt that here was a case of a species of sex repression, for it was proved in evidence that Ouida had in her wardrobe a complete set of baby garments, also that she would at times suffer from fits of depression for weeks on end and would

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gaze at her own reflection in the mirror for hours together. It was proved, too, that although the girl was for ever receiving love-letters and huge boxes of expensive flowers and sweets, she herself had been the sender.

A singularly inept instance of dismemberment was that of the Soho butcher, Voisin. In the early hours of November in the year 1917 a sack containing portions of a woman's body was discovered behind the railings of one of the squares in the Euston Road district, and it was at first thought that perhaps this might be one of the victims of either the foreign Secret Service or of the air raid that had taken place on the previous night. The paper in which the remains had been wrapped bore a strange and ill-spelt reference to Belgium, and as London was at that time filled with refugees from that country it was suggested that behind the murder lay some political intrigue or war-time act of revenge. It will be remembered that in the murder of Beron in the East End, for which Steinie Morrison was arrested and convicted, a like suggestion of secret societies was put forward, the murder taking place so soon after the Sidney Street anarchist outrages. The marks on Beron's cheek were supposed to indicate the letter "S" and, as in the Voisin case, the cry of "Spy" was well to the fore.

But the murder for which Voisin went to the scaffold held no such Phillips Oppenheim back-

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ground. That background was in fact rather ordinary and consisted of two women and one man. Madame Gerrard, with whom Voisin had been living, had, on her return from a visit to her native country, found that her butcher lover had, during her absence, been consoling himself with another lady and, what was more to the point, that the new-comer seemed in a fair way of ousting her from the position she had hitherto held in Monsieur Voisin's heart. For some time an arrangement of sorts by which Voisin visited Madame Gerrard and at the same time permitted Madame Roche to share his own house went on as well as could be expected, but it was not long before Louis began to look upon Madame Gerrard as somewhat of an encumbrance, the more so as he happened to be in that lady's debt for a considerable sum of money for which she was demanding an immediate settlement. Under the circumstances the removal of Madame Gerrard from his immediate sphere of action seemed to be indicated and Voisin, having no more scruples about killing a woman than he had about killing a calf in the course of his business, went about the affair in an efficient, and thorough manner and Madame Gerrard was duly butchered. And there efficiency seemed to fail Monsieur Voisin. Bloodstains in the lady's room in which, by the way, he very carelessly left an excellent photograph of himself framed on the mantelpiece, the concealment of

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Madame Gerrard's head and hands in a cask of sawdust in his own home, the wrapping of the remains in butcher's muslin, thereby proclaiming his trade—these were but a few of the incredibly stupid things by which the killer drew attention to himself. Despite the fact that there was a war on at the time the authorities spared time enough to send Monsieur Voisin to the execution shed.

The head of a victim has often proved a stumbling block to the disposer on account, of course, of its being the main factor in police investigation. Some years ago in Paris a certain charming Polish lady, Mademoiselle Jabourvuski, solved the knotty problem by preserving the heads of her young men victims in acid and retaining them as mementoes of their acquaintance. For the rest, the lady borrowed a page from the Burke and Hare book, disposing of the residue of her lovers to doctors and medical students for purposes of dissection.

Monsieur Macé, the hero of the Voirbo case, was also instrumental in solving the murder of a miserly old woman named Madame Gillet, and here again it was his masterly handling of the case that brought the murderers to the guillotine. In the year 1878 a Madame Devoeux who kept a boarding-house in the rue Poliveau in Paris received a visit from a young student who gave the name of Emile Gerrard and who told the woman that he wished to rent a comfortable room in her establishment. He was shown several apartments but seemed

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somewhat difficult to suit till he was shown one in which was a roomy and empty cupboard with a stout lock. The room was not one that would recommend itself to a boarder who was seeking comfort, as it was dirty, dusty and had evidently been long in disuse. But it seemed to be just what Monsieur Gerrard required and the bargain was made. The student then left, returning the next day carrying beneath his arm a large parcel. He was not long in the room however for he left almost immediately, and to Madame Devoeux's annoyance, failed to return. The good lady had been complimenting herself on letting a room that she had looked upon as unlettable, and although Gerrard had paid a week's rent in advance Madame was disappointed. She found the door locked and, it being her practice never to display undue interest in her lodgers' affairs, she left things for a week before she had the lock taken from the door and entered the room.

She crossed immediately to the window and threw it open. A curious musty odour that had certainly not been present when she showed Monsieur Gerrard the room was in the air. But looking round the room Madame Devoeux saw that there was nothing to account for the offensive smell. It was not till she opened the big cupboard that she knew that she had discovered the source. For on the floor lay the mysterious bundle she had seen the student carry into the house, a bundle that bore

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on its outer wrappings curious stains, and from which the coverings had already begun to break away. Madame seems to have been a woman of strong nerves, for although she sensed the sinister character of the parcel she lost no time in dragging it out into the centre of the floor and cutting the string. The coverings fell away and Madame Devoeux gave a piercing scream as she found herself looking at a collection of what could be nothing else but human remains.

Other lodgers came running, and in a few minutes the police had taken charge of the horrible relics and had carried them to the Morgue where the gruesome exhibits were placed on public view for the purposes of identification. In those days the Morgue was one of the show places in Paris, with an entry on to the street through which anyone could pass. Even nursemaids have been known to take their charges of tender years past the steamy plate-glass windows behind which lay the corpses that had been taken from the Seine or been found murdered in street or cellar. But, beyond the fact that the remains from the cupboard in the Rue Poliveau were those of a woman and that at one time the left forearm had been badly burnt, there was no clue. It was only when Gustave Macé, with the thoroughness that had characterised his work on the Voirbo case, examined the lists of missing women that he discovered, by a process of elimination, that the relics in the Morgue might

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possibly be those of a certain Madame Gillet who divided her time between running a small milk-stall and charing for the studios and offices in the neighbourhood, a strange occupational combination.

Enquiries into the activities of this old woman elicited the fact that she was a miser, and a search of her poverty-stricken room brought to light a fair amount in cash hidden in the mattress, and documents showing that certain bonds had lately changed hands, the signature on the transfer being that of a man named Lebiez. Monsieur Macé had little difficulty as a rule in tracing unnamed suspects but, given a name, the matter was simplicity itself and search was of short duration. Lebiez was quickly brought in and, through him, another man named Barre. And under the influence of the third degree their story was not long in coming. A terrible story it was. Barre and Lebiez had come to Paris from the provinces and had gained a precarious living in shady transactions around the Bourse and, in fact, by any means that came to hand, legal or illegal. It had been when old Madame Gillet applied to them for work in the cleaning of their office that they discovered the secret of her wealth. The rest was simple. The Gillet milk-stall was patronised and on one of her visits with the morning supply the two killers had made short work of the feeble old lady. A box had been prepared in readiness but it was found that it was not large enough for the reception

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of the body and dismemberment was decided upon. Portions of Madame Gillet were placed, as had been originally intended, in the box ; the remainder was taken in a parcel to the rue Poliveau where the cupboard had been waiting for its reception. The box was sent to the Gare d'Orleans, where it was duly recovered.

Both Barre and Lebiez went to the guillotine, and Barre's mistress, a pretty young girl named Leontine Lépine, was sent to prison for three years, it being understood that although it was proved that she had spent much time and labour removing blood-stains from the office she had had no knowledge of the actual murder.

A gentleman who took peculiar care in disposing of his wife piecemeal was Mr. William Sheward of Norwich, who spent three evenings cutting up the late Mrs. Sheward and took infinite pains in strewing the portions over so wide an area that it was not till thirteen days after the discovery of the first portion of *corpus delicti* that there was enough assembled to point to a murder having been committed. Even then identification was out of the question. True, there were certain police enquiries and among those questioned was Mr. Sheward, but his statement that his wife had gone away on a long journey seems to have been accepted without suspicion. A similar story was, it will be remembered, told regarding Mrs. Belle Crippen.

Sheward went on his way undisturbed. He

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moved, certainly, from his house but only to King Street where he opened a pawnbroker's business. But the venture did not prosper and Sheward seems to have gone from bad to worse financially and morally. He had taken to live with him a woman who had borne him two or three children, and it seems strange that nobody seems to have enquired when he expected his wife back from that long journey she had taken. Also Sheward began to drink heavily and then there came the day when after a fit of deep depression he suddenly disappeared. A few days later a wearied, dishevelled man who had evidently been drinking walked into the Walworth Road police station and informed the desk sergeant that he had killed his wife. The sergeant, who was quite used to drunken men making these statements in order to get a night's lodging, told him to sleep his liquor off and talk to him in the morning. It was then that it became clear that the man was speaking the truth. His detailed description of the infinite pains he had taken to dispose of the remains makes terrible reading. He described his grim evening tasks, of how piece by piece he had taken the flesh out at night and scattered it in the outlying districts, even the woman's hair had been cut into a fine dust with scissors and had been scattered to the winds as he walked the streets of Norwich. The hangman at Norwich Castle ended a life that must have become unbearable for the murderer,

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although his method of disposal had given him no less than eighteen years of freedom.

Some years ago a certain Mrs. Cailey, a widow who was up in London from Lyme Regis in Dorsetshire, was walking along South Street, Battersea, when she saw in the ground-floor window of one of the houses a card stating that apartments were to be let. She knocked at the door and was received by Mrs. Christian, the proprietress, and after viewing the rooms Mrs. Cailey decided on taking up her temporary residence at the establishment. Between lodger and landlady there soon grew up an affectionate friendship although there were times when Mrs. Christian thought that Mrs. Cailey might be a little more prompt in payment for her board and lodging. But Mrs. Cailey over the tea-cups had opened her heart to Mrs. Christian. She was a wealthy widow, she said, of a Dorset man, and there were certain legal details with which her solicitors were grappling but which would soon be set right, and then she would come into a large fortune. In the meantime Mrs. Cailey confessed that she was just a little short of ready money. But she held out glowing promises that her good friend Mrs. Christian should share in her fortune when her legal affairs should be happily settled.

And then at last the postman brought to South Street the glad tidings that on that very morning Mrs. Cailey was to call on her solicitors and receive the first payment of eight hundred pounds, a fore-

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taste of the vast sums to come to her in the near future. Mrs. Christian saw her lodger off and then waited with pleasurable excitement for her return. As the day passed Mrs. Christian began to wonder whether she had not been rather too trusting with the lady from Dorset. But the next morning Mrs. Cailey came back with a strange story of being attacked when she had left the solicitors' office and robbed of her money. But Mrs. Christian had no need to worry, she was going again to the office in Bedford Row that very morning and everything was going to be quite all right. So once again Mrs. Christian watched from her window as Mrs. Cailey, dressed in her best, sailed majestically down the pavement of South Street. And again she waited.

Mrs. Cailey, this time, did not return at all. But reading her newspaper Mrs. Christian saw with horror that certain portions of a woman's body had been found floating in the Thames and had been retrieved by a police boat from the mud flats near Southwark. Then followed during the next few days further grim finds as far apart in the river as Limehouse, Wandsworth, Hammersmith, Lambeth and Blackwall. Mrs. Christian's spirits fell to zero and at last she summoned up her courage to visit the mortuary where, after viewing the remains, she told the police that from the measurements of the assembled *corpus* she had no doubt that it was all that remained of her friend Mrs. Cailey. So poor Mrs. Christian wrote off the

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affair as a bad debt and once more the Apartments To Let card graced the window of the house in South Street. But that was by no means the end of the story, for some time later Mrs. Christian found herself face to face with Mrs. Cailey alive and well in the street. It is not recorded what passed between the two women or whether Mrs. Christian recovered any of the money owing to her, but as a result of the encounter the identification was duly erased and cancelled from the police records, and to this day the remains that had been distributed far and wide on the bosom of Father Thames have never been identified and the murder has long ago taken its place in the archives of undiscovered crimes. It will be remembered that the fiendish baby-farmer, Mrs. Dyer, used the Thames as a medium of disposing of her pathetic little bundles.

Another gentleman who took infinite pains to dispose of his victim by dismemberment was James Greenacre. Greenacre was to have been married to a Mrs. Hannah Brown when just before the ceremony that lady was found to be missing and as she had been last seen in Greenacre's company he was at once questioned by the police. And the authorities being no respector of a person's privacy had the colossal impudence to force themselves into the room where Greenacre was in bed with a lady named Gale. And whether it was to save his skin, or as a graceful gesture of chivalry to his bedfellow, Greenacre indignantly denied ever having

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heard the name of Hannah Brown. It was a fatal mistake and Greenacre was there and then arrested. In his confession that followed soon after his conviction he told a grisly tale of how he had carried Hannah's legs to certain osier beds in Coldharbour Lane, Camberwell, and had taken the head in a parcel in an omnibus to the Regent's Canal where it was found wedged in one of the locks. His story was that the death of Hannah had been the outcome of an accident following a quarrel, but the story was told with little conviction and Greenacre entered the condemned cell after listening to what must surely be the longest death sentence oration ever delivered from the bench, an ordeal that must have made bitter indeed the prospect of death. In Greenacre's day the law seemed to delight in badgering the condemned criminal instead of, as now, getting the ghastly business of the black cap disposed of with the least possible delay. Not only had Greenacre to listen to the Recorder's long speech but he was forced also to listen to the condemned sermon preached at him by the "ordinary" in chapel prior to his execution. Meeting the cleric later in the corridor he upbraided him soundly for daring to refer to him in the sermon as the murderer. The woman Gale who, like Leontine Lépine, Barre's mistress, was proved to have cleaned up the bloodstains in the murder house, was given seven years and a shorter, but no less distressing, lecture from the bench.

## CHAPTER III

### DISPOSAL BY CONCEALMENT

CRIMES committed in lonely places or in the wild solitudes of the earth are easily hidden, at least temporarily, by the method of burial, but when the locality of the murder is some large city or populous district this means of disposal is by no means so simple a matter. It becomes, however, of prime importance for the murderer to hide without delay the body of his victim. Not only is the killer anxious to remove the grisly sight from his own eyes but the disposal of the evidence so vital to obtaining a conviction, the concealment of the *corpus delicti*, must be his first concern. Absence of the necessary tools, the unsuitability of the place or time, these and other things may rule out the burial method. No doubt Mr. Paiserbeck would have buried his Catherine deep in Colorado solitudes had he not been so desperately anxious to put as many miles between himself and the scene of the tragedy as possible. As it was, he very nearly won clear, for his arrest took place at the very moment that the train that was to carry him away to lose himself among the teeming thousands

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of Denver steamed into the little wayside station of Glenwood Springs.

The story of the Paiserbecks, man and wife, is no new one. Two young people falling in love and marrying against their parents' wishes only to find that the struggle for an existence, supported entirely by their unaided efforts, has proved to be beyond their strength. Here are all the elements of the suicide pact but whether Paiserbeck could honestly plead that excuse is open to serious doubt. At the present time the man is serving a term of lifelong imprisonment in the penitentiary at Canon City for the murder of his wife, but there are many who still wonder whether Paiserbeck is not the victim of a miscarriage of justice so far as premeditated murder is concerned and whether the story he told at his trial was not, in the main, true.

The pair had been well brought up, expensively educated. They were cultured, refined, and the hardships that came to them in their married life must have told heavily on them. It may well be that love flew out of the window as poverty entered by the door or it may be that misfortune had so strengthened their love one for the other that even the thought of being parted in death may have been intolerable to them. We are not concerned with the guilt or otherwise of Augustus Paiserbeck, but with the means by which he sought to dispose of his wife's body, whether that body was the outcome of murder or self-destruction. But, whatever

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the true version of the tragedy, there is but little doubt that the husband took infinite pains to prevent Catherine's remains from being discovered. Not only were he and his wife staying in lodgings in Glenwood under assumed names, but the scene of the tragedy had been so well chosen that it took twenty men the better part of two days, assisted as they were by Paiserbeck himself, to locate the spot.

But, when at last that spot was found, surely there was evidence enough to give a certain support to the husband's story. Two rubber bags which Paiserbeck swore they had used in an endeavour to asphyxiate themselves with ether, and empty cans that had apparently contained that drug, gave credence to the suicide motive he put forward at his trial. Moreover the youth exhibited a wound in his chest by which he sought to bolster up his story. The administration of the drug had been successful he said, in the case of Catherine, but he, being no doubt of a stronger physique and possessing greater powers of resistance, had quickly recovered from the temporary insensibility to find his wife lying dead by his side. In the anguish of the moment he had taken his jack-knife and made an attempt upon his own life but at the pain of the thrust he had lost courage and had decided to postpone the following of his wife into the unknown. A good story and one that, one would think, would have impressed a jury. The fact that the passports and marriage licence of the Paiserbecks

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were found torn up in the vicinity certainly did not detract from the version advanced by the youth although these points were stressed against him.

There is a great deal to be said for the suicide story. It would surely be but natural that the couple, if they had intended to commit suicide together, should assume false names so that their parents might be spared the disgrace attendant on their act. Natural, too, that they should destroy their papers of identity and that they should seek a solitude of scrub oak and matted undergrowth where discovery of their bodies might be delayed perhaps for ever. Natural, too, that the boy, feeling the sharp bite of the knife-point in his living flesh, should lack the determination to drive the weapon home. There are not many with the courage of an Alma Rattenbury.

True, the manner of Paiserbeck's return to his lodgings and his subsequent secret departure from them points the finger of suspicion although that, too, in a way fits in with the story he told. So secret, in fact, was that departure that the landlady, evidently a woman who kept a sharp eye on her lodgers, had thought fit to inform the police. Paiserbeck, she said, had slipped out of the house in a surreptitious manner, and carrying a suit-case had run in the direction of the railway station. The fact that his wife had been with him when they went out that morning, and that he had returned to the house alone, was to the woman's

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mind suspicious and so it was that when later the train for Denver pulled in and Paiserbeck was about to enter it, two detectives suggested to him that it might be as well if he waited for the next train. Meanwhile, would he mind answering a few questions, the first of these questions being as to the whereabouts of his wife ?

Paiserbeck did what he could under the distressing circumstances in which he found himself. His wife was staying with friends up in the mountains, he told the police, and it was only when the detectives insisted that he point out the district of her sojourn that he agreed to accompany them. There was nothing further to be gained by concealment and the sooner his wife's body was found the sooner would it be able to give silent evidence to the suicide story that was either true or had been carefully prepared. As has been said, it took twenty men the better part of two days to locate Catherine Paiserbeck.

The story told by the accused was not accepted by the jury. Why, if Paiserbeck had intended to follow his wife, had he not sought other methods ? If he lacked the courage to stab himself to death there were other and less painful means by which he could have joined Catherine. But what if he had held no such ideas ? Might he not, had he once won clear, have changed his name and returned to single blessedness ? Be that as it may, had it not been for the intervention of the astute landlady,

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it is very doubtful whether the body of Catherine Paiserbeck would ever have been found till, perhaps, a flock of crows might have been seen hovering over the vicinity where it lay or some rancher's dog pointed its master to the spot. There was a case quite recently where a school-master had been murdered and taken twenty miles away from the scene of the crime and hidden so effectively that it needed the grunting of a herd of wandering hogs rooting in the undergrowth to lead to the discovery of the body. The cases where buzzards and other birds of prey have led men to the gallows are too numerous to mention.

The problems that faced a certain youthful Sunday-school superintendent on the evenings of April the 3rd and 12th in the year 1895 were indeed pressing and calculated to tax the strength, the nerve and the endurance of far stronger men than the 5-ft. 5-in. Theodore Durrant. One wonders how it came about that the two girls who were the victims of the brutal attacks that were to rouse the whole of America to mob frenzy were induced to enter the Emmanuel Church in San Francisco after dark even under the escort of so trusted a friend as Theodore Durrant. For those were the days when young ladies were prone to swoon at the very mention of horrors, and the Emmanuel Church had had its full share of notoriety since its consecration five years previously. Many had been the unsavoury scandals attached

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to members of its congregation and even in that half-decade no less than two of its pastors had found themselves somewhat distressingly in the news. One of these had committed suicide and the other had been arraigned and had stood his trial for murder. It is only fair to the latter reverend gentleman to state that he had nothing whatever to do with the Durrant affair and, in his own case, was triumphantly acquitted. But the proceedings did nothing to lessen the sinister reputation that had gathered like a dark cloud about the Emmanuel. The double murder for which Theodore Durrant was sent to the gallows all but closed the doors of the sacred building for ever.

Quite an exemplary youth was this Theodore Durrant, secretary to the Christian Endeavour Society, a bugler in the signal corps of the National Guard and an industrious worker in church affairs. It was mainly through his activities in this latter direction that Theodore came into contact and formed friendships with Blanche Lamont and Minnie Williams. Popular and well-liked among the church set, it must be admitted that Theodore had little to recommend him on the score of personal appearance, and his success at parties and at picnics was no doubt due in part to his skill with the guitar and other stringed instruments, accomplishments which, in the prehistoric days before broadcasting had a distinct social value.

The disappearance of Blanche Lamont had in-

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trigued San Francisco for some days. Detectives had been quietly at work checking up the girl's movements since the moment she had left her home on April the 3rd and advertisements inserted by her relatives had appeared in the personal columns of the Californian Press. The Pacific seaboard had long possessed an evil reputation as being associated with the vilest of all trades, that of the shipping of white women to the brothels of Honolulu, that melting-pot of vice where brown, black, yellow and white races mix, and it was in this direction that the police naturally turned in their endeavours to locate the missing girl. Criminal haunts were combed, every bye-way connected with the traffic explored, and then San Francisco was startled and horrified by the discovery of the murdered body, not of Blanche Lamont, but of her friend and fellow-worker Minnie Williams. The discovery switched the detectives off their underworld course and turned their attention to a narrower social circle.

Just within the front entrance of the Emmanuel Church leading in from Bartlett Street are situated the reading-room and library attached to the building. On the morning of April the 13th one of the church cleaners discovered on the floor of the library the crumpled figure of a young girl. She was lying in a pool of blood and her clothing was torn and disarranged. The woman, seeing there was no hope of the girl being alive, left the

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building and ran to the boarding-house where resided the pastor at that time attached to the church, the Reverend Dr. Gibson. The behaviour of this gentleman on learning the tragic news was, to say the least, strange. Whether he shunned the unwelcome publicity attached to his predecessors or whether the reason he gave was the true one, one cannot say. First he utterly refused to view the body of the dead girl till he had called upon one of the church trustees and asked him to accompany him to the church. Also, for some reason or other, he asked this trustee and the cleaner to say nothing to a soul concerning the grim discovery, wishing, as he said, to avoid publicity for his church. The presence of the trustee on the occasion when at last he was called in to view the body was necessary, the pastor asserted, for his soul's sake, as never in his life had he looked upon a woman with her clothing disarranged. This the doctor elaborated in the witness-box, stating over and over again that never had he looked upon the female form undraped, a fact of which he appeared to be inordinately proud. It was his strangeness of manner throughout the proceedings that the worthy pastor had to thank for drawing upon himself the very notoriety he had been so anxious to avoid. It did more than this, for Theodore's counsel did their utmost during the trial of their client to shift the guilt for the actual murders from their client's shoulders on to those

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of the puritanical Dr. Gibson, a man, it is needless to say, of an unblemished reputation and against whom there was not the slightest trace of evidence.

In a crowded city such as San Francisco the disposal of a body presents many difficulties that are absent in a scattered community. Emmanuel Church is situated in a crowded district between Twenty-second and Twenty-third Streets and the church has no outlet but that giving on to a smaller thoroughfare, Bartlett Street, save for a small door leading out of the class-room. The murderer of Minnie Williams had little choice in the matter of concealment and here we are to assume, in the light of future events, he lacked the courage or perhaps the physical strength to repeat an act that must already have once before been performed by him. One can only surmise that the miscreant dared not carry his victim to the belfry, the sole secure, if temporary, hiding-place at his disposal. For he, of all people, must have known what he would see there, huddled up among the rafters. It was left to a policeman who was set on guard at the church after the finding of Minnie Williams's body to suspect that a like fate might possibly have overtaken Minnie's friend Blanche Lamont for whom he and his colleagues had been so diligently searching. To pass the time of his vigil in the lonely building this keen young officer decided to make certain investigations for himself. There were wooden stairs leading to the belfry and it was

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certain marks on the dust that had accumulated here that suggested that something had been dragged across the treads, a heavy sack or perhaps a body. As the officer, Riehl, proceeded, these signs became more and more evident, and on the topmost landing after a climb of three steep wooden stairways he came upon the body of the missing girl lying huddled shapelessly in the dust beneath the one bell the church possessed. Once, at least, must that bell have called, from the death loft, the faithful of Emmanuel Church to worship.

And now by a process of enquiry that need not be dealt with here the movements of the two girls were quickly determined. Street car conductors, janitors, neighbours came forward and gave their testimony and gradually the enquiries narrowed down till they rested upon Theodore Durrant who had undoubtedly been seen both with Blanche and Minnie shortly before their disappearances. There was, of course, conflicting testimony but the balance of the evidence was dead against the suspected man and young Durrant was arrested. Every moment of the youth's life for the past few weeks was probed to the utmost.

He told his story. He possessed keys, he said, to the Emmanuel Church and freely admitted being in the building on the evening of April the 3rd. Moreover, he admitted having seen and talked with Blanche on that evening, but swore that he had left her in the street and had proceeded to the

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church where he had been asked to repair certain defects in the electrical wiring. But unfortunately for Theodore's story, the wiring showed no signs of having been touched and no one could be traced as having given orders that any such work should be done. Nor, it seems, could Theodore supply the name of that person. A staunch plank in the platform of the prosecution was the fact that Minnie Williams's purse was found in Theodore's pocket when he came to be searched, his explanation of this damning fact being the rather lame one that he had picked it up in the street. The net tightened. A lady who had been seated at her window on the opposite side of the street, on reading her newspaper, suddenly remembered that she had seen Blanche and Theodore enter the church together. Vainly the defence sought most unfairly to draw suspicion upon the unfortunate and eminently respectable Dr. Gibson, pointing out that the pastor's behaviour had been strange if not suspicious throughout, and that he was of a far more robust physique than young Durrant and certainly better able to perform the herculean task of carrying a dead weight of nearly nine stone up three flights of steep stairs in the dark, a line of argument that might apply equally to the late Mr. Sandow. The good doctor's puritanical outburst, moreover, might suggest repression. But not even the thousand and one meshes of the net of United States justice served to save Theodore Durrant from the rope. A last

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a Mr. Millar, was advised not to make use of the basements but to keep the doors locked and if possible to cut off that part of the house altogether. One can hardly credit the crass stupidity of the woman who, whether she were guilty or not, must have known that she was treading upon dangerous ground.

Poor Jacob Denton's body was duly found covered with loose earth in that basement, the door of which was found to have not only been double locked but cemented up. Mrs. Peete on relinquishing her duties and leaving the house had apparently taken no great pains to hide herself and was willing enough when visited by the police to answer any questions they liked to put to her. She had a story all prepared. Mr. Denton had been "running around," as she expressed it, with a Spanish woman. Unfortunately Mrs. Peete did not know the woman's name nor could she furnish any other particulars concerning the lady that might assist the police in tracing her, but she was quite sure that, if Mr. Denton had been murdered, they had not far to look for the murderer. According to Mrs. Peete the fascinating, sinister, dark-eyed beauty from Spain had been capable of anything.

Questioned as to why she had warned Mr. Millar regarding the basement, Mrs. Peete informed the police that she was merely handing on a warning she herself had received and that she had considered it only fair that Mr. Millar should know what she had been told. From whom the original warning

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had come Mrs. Peete does not seem to have stated—possibly it was from the lady from Spain. It was unfortunate for Mrs. Peete, too, that she should have been identified as a woman who had, shortly after Mr. Denton's departure to fetch a cab, pawned a valuable ring that had belonged to that gentleman and that she had cashed certain cheques purporting to have been signed and endorsed by Jacob but which had most certainly not been so signed and endorsed. Evidence, too, was forthcoming that loose earth had been carried into the basement by her express orders, cement purchased in her name and a shovel openly borrowed from an obliging neighbour. Items, perhaps, of ordinary household requirements but they hardly fit in with the claimed innocence of Mrs. Peete's warning against the basement. The nebulous figure of the fascinating *señorita*, kept alive as a good top-liner by enthusiastic newspaper reporters, became fainter and fainter still as the case proceeded, and ultimately vanished into thin air. Concealment had given the killer of Jacob Denton a bare two months' respite. The sentence on Mrs. Peete was imprisonment for life.

Concealment, indeed, seldom gives a long immunity from arrest. In the case of the two Chicago boys, one of whom, Richard Loeb, has lately himself been murdered by a fellow convict in Joliet Gaol, the attempt to conceal the body of Bobby Franks in a culvert failed in its object within a few

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hours. Curious how culverts attract the criminal desirous of concealing his victim. Chester Connor chose a drain in which to place the murdered body of his wife in Wyandotte. A gentleman, too, named Van Vlack, having killed his divorced wife, Mildred, in Tacoma, forced the woman's body into a culvert on the highway on the outskirts of the town. Needless to say the discoveries of these crimes took the police but a matter of hours. Concealment cannot be for long and culverts seem to be particularly inadequate as mediums. Mr. Robinson's trunk, like Vere Goold's, was opened within a few hours of its being left in the cloak-room at Charing Cross.

Culverts, too, were used by an atrocious murderer named Wilson on the borders of New Mexico. Wilson, a ne'er-do-well without funds but with a certain attraction, one may suppose, for the opposite sex, scraped acquaintance with a young widow with the clear intention of acquiring the fairly large sum of money the woman was in the habit of carrying about with her. This sum was the proceeds of the insurance policy on her late husband and although at first the company had agreed to pay her a monthly allowance the widow had later asked for a cash payment in full settlement. Whether this had been at the instigation of Wilson is not known, but it is very probable that the suggestion came from him, especially as we find him purchasing for cash a new car in which he and the widow set out on a

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tour. The discovery of the woman's body on one of the lonely stretches of a New Mexican desert told its own story of murder but, owing to the absence of any clothing, identification of the victim was difficult. It was here that Wilson made use of culverts, not for the disposal of the widow's body but for the disposal of the clothes she had been wearing. Piece by piece the poor woman's garments were assembled but it was still a matter of great difficulty to read any message their silent testimony might give. For the garments were slashed and cut to pieces, collar and linings torn from the coat, skirt, stockings and corsets reduced to ribbons, even the lining ripped out from the woman's shoes. And here Wilson made the one mistake. His knife in cutting through the collar of the coat had slashed away the tab bearing the maker's name, or he thought it had done so. As a matter of fact, the tab was found hanging by a single thread and from this the identity of the victim was at last established. The case is of very recent date and it is as well for the sake of the poor woman's relatives that her name shall not be given, but it was ascertained that it was her habit to sew into her clothing the major portion of her fortune and there is little doubt that Wilson was perfectly aware of this. That maker's tab and the selling of the car brought Wilson to his well-deserved fate. Culverts had been as much use to him as they had been to Leopold and Loeb, Chester Connor and Van Vlack.

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Frederick Deeming brought concealment to a fine art. Like Joseph Smith he never varied his methods and so, when one day a Melbourne householder noticed that the boards of the flooring of his lower room were somewhat amateurly laid he proceeded forthwith to rectify the matter, a procedure that in due course brought Mr. Deeming to the gallows. Deeming, clever as he undoubtedly was during his long career of fraud, seems to have been, in common with all murderers, sadly lacking in the matter of small detail. When the Melbourne police found the body of a woman cemented beneath the floor-boards they called to mind that the house had recently been in the occupation of a Mr. and Mrs. Williams and, this knowledge being broadcast, it reached the ears of their comrades in Sydney, who then remembered that the remains of a Mrs. Williams had also in their own city been discovered in somewhat similar circumstances, a coincidence that definitely suggested police action. Enquiries sent to Scotland Yard then brought to light the fact that a Mr. and Mrs. Williams had recently resided in Rainham, near Liverpool, and that before his marriage Williams had rented a villa in which he had been visited by his sister and her four children who had mysteriously disappeared. The casual mention, too, that during his tenancy Mr. Williams had purchased considerable quantities of cement in order to make the flooring of the villa damp-proof was to say the least significant. Deeming in due

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course reached the condemned cell, but he had been allowed a long run of freedom. The more surprising, considering that in three instances where he disposed of an inconvenient family not only did he employ the same methods of concealment, but he did not even trouble to vary the name of Williams.

Again we see the one-way mind of the murderer. In purchasing cement Mrs. Peete and Frederick Deeming were merely following in the steps of Mr. and Mrs. Manning. (Is it not somewhat strange that so many murderers should possess names containing the double letter? *Crippen*, *Deeming*, *Troppmann*, *Peete*, *Durrant*, *Neill* *Cream*, *Seddon*, *Muller*, *Thurtell*, *Chantrelle*, *Dumppard*, *Kiss*, to name a few at random.) Mrs. Manning was a Swiss girl who had been lady's maid in one of the Scottish aristocratic families and who, to her sorrow, married the son of a publican named Manning. Manning junior was a railway guard in the employ of the Great Western Railway and was for some time under suspicion of being concerned with the great bullion robbery of the "forties." This suspicion, whether it was justified or not, dogged the footsteps of the unfortunate man wherever he went and various ventures by which he and his wife attempted to make a living were doomed to failure from the start by reason of this handicap. The couple drifted from place to place and in the year 1849 we find them living in poverty in Bermondsey, where Manning's scanty earnings were

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apparently supplemented by the contributions provided by the amorous visits to Mrs. Manning of a wealthy gentleman named O'Connor, visits of which the husband was certainly well aware. So when O'Connor disappeared the police thought it advisable to call on the lady to make a few discreet enquiries. The discovery that the furniture at the Bermondsey house had been disposed of in bulk at a panic price to a Hebrew opportunist in the neighbourhood and that everything pointed to a hasty departure caused the police to institute a thorough search of the premises and it was the discovery of cement still moist surrounding one of the flagstones in the kitchen that led to the discovery of all that remained of the philandering Mr. O'Connor. If one were asked the three things that form the greatest allies to Scotland Yard one might mention cement, trunks and the indiscretion of the common or garden murderer. This indiscretion was well to the fore in the Manning affair. It was shown in the evidence that Mr. Manning had not only made many enquiries relating to the action of certain drugs on the human frame but had enquired as to the exact spot on a man's skull where a bullet would be most efficient. Moreover, he had openly bought the cement and a crowbar, and, in purchasing the latter, had volunteered the information to the salesman that he wanted one strong enough to raise large stones. He had also shown a remarkably keen interest in air guns and their efficiency. Mrs.

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Manning was little better, for her flight to Edinburgh was fairly obvious and, on the woman being traced, it was easy for the police to discover that she had been visiting stockbrokers in the Scottish city in an endeavour to realise on certain bonds which were proved to be the property of the dead man. As in the case of the Dumollards each did their best when in the dock to place the rope round the neck of the other, but if ever there was a clear case of collusion it was that of the Mannings of Bermondsey. They ascended the scaffold together and were ushered into eternity in the presence of a huge concourse of people in front of the Horse-monger Lane Gaol. Concealment in their case gave them a respite of barely a week, from August 8th to 17th, to be exact.

The Bletry Case in Hegersheim brought Herr Bletry so close to the guillotine that he must almost have heard the hiss of the falling blade. The case became known as the Mystery of the Yellow Box and possessed many strange features. The box had been sent to Hegersheim left luggage office and, as is the way of these grim deposits, had made its presence so offensively felt that it had been opened by order of the stationmaster and the body of a middle-aged woman had been discovered. Now bodies do not get into locked trunks of their own accord : it would take a better man even than the late Houdini to do that. Initials on a bed sheet in which the remains were wrapped threw immediate

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suspicion on an innkeeper named Bletry, and it was proved by the evidence of certain witnesses that a strange woman had called at his tavern and had never been seen to leave again. This woman was supposed to be one, Adèle Brouart, a former house-keeper of Bletry's, and the remains were duly identified as those of this person. True, there were doubts, as Adèle Brouart had not been in the district for many years and only fleeting glimpses had been obtained of her as she had entered the inn. But the yellow box bore a remarkable similarity to one possessed by Bletry's new housekeeper, Franziska Lallemend, although this point was never thoroughly looked into. The whole case bristled with rumour and was apparently sadly bungled by all concerned, and although the evidence was dead against the accused man he was acquitted, the main happening that caused the prosecution to crumple up being the appearance of Madame Brouart herself alive and well. Reading of the report of her tragic death the woman had come forward complaining, like Mark Twain, that the report had been grossly exaggerated. A *corpus delicti* come to life !

Bletry was lucky. His story of a bleeding nose no more accounted for the profuse stains in his room than Ruxton's cut finger accounted for the stained carpets and clothes in his Lancaster house. Moreover, as in the cases of Jessie Maclahan in Glasgow and Voirbo in Paris, the floor was seen to have been meticulously scrubbed. The verdict of acquittal

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was received none too well by Bletry's neighbours, who evidently had their own ideas as to his guilt, and from that time he was more or less ostracised in the village. Friends of other days refused to speak to him or sit in the same room with him. No one could be found to patronise his tavern or do business with him. In short, Herr Bletry was drummed out of the community and made his way abroad where he seems to have in no way bettered himself, dying within a short space of time in abject poverty. The railway station cloak-room was no kinder to him that it was to Mahon or Robinson or Vere Goold.

Some day there will be added to the list of the world's heroes a man who will dare enter a second-hand shop and ask to see a selection of trunks. Maybe dealers will in the not too distant future be forced to keep a "trunk book" as to-day the chemists keep their poison books, and cloak-room attendants may ask customers to fill up a form declaring the contents of deposits that they may deem to be suspicious. It is, of course, only natural that with no spade or open ground available the first thought of the killer should be to put out of sight the victim of his crime in the most efficient way possible. But if the trunk market is closed what is a poor murderer to do? One would have thought that Mahon with the whole foreshore of Sussex at his disposal need not have left blood-stained linen and knives in the cloak-room at

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Waterloo Station, but it can well be understood that Robinson with his one little room in Westminster or the Vere Goolds with their flat in Monte Carlo were more or less forced to the time-honoured method of the trunk or to the clumsy bundles of Voirbo and Wainwright. A desperate method, at that, for assistance had to be obtained, helpers hired to hoist the heavy article on to a cab, porters to wheel it from carriage to cloak-room—all potential witnesses in case of the plan going astray.

Bletry's must be one of the first of the trunk cases and it may be that to this gentleman belongs the doubtful honour of introducing the method. But the trunk crime *par excellence* is undoubtedly that of Gabrielle Bompard and Michel Eyraud. Gabrielle, a charming but utterly unscrupulous prostitute, was the darling of the boulevards and when at long last she was sentenced to twenty years penal servitude the crowds gave her an ovation that might well be envied by a modern day film star arriving in the French capital. The affair had all the ingredients for the concoction of a scandal such as the Parisian loves: a flashing dark eye on the boulevards that attracted Eyraud and forged the first link in the chain that was to lead him to the guillotine, a little street-walker and a bankrupt distiller, a love-nest in the rue Tronson Ducoudray and an elderly lover.

It was a worker on the roads who noticed, on the Lyons highway, a peculiar smell that caused him to make investigations. These investigations resulted

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in the discovery of the remains of a human body hidden in the thick undergrowth of a small ravine. Nearby was discovered, a little later, a broken trunk and a tangle of cords and there were soon forthcoming certain indications that there might be a connection between these finds and the remains. Monsieur Goron, the head of the *Sûreté*, consulting the list of missing persons in Paris and the big cities of France, decided that the find on the Lyons Road fitted in very well with the disappearance three weeks previously, from his home in the rue Rougemont, of a sheriff's officer named Gouffé, an eminently respectable old gentleman whose only weakness was a taste for amorous diversion. Again referring to his lists, Monsieur Goron found that the disappearance of Gouffé again fitted in very well with another fact, the disappearance of a certain ex-convict named Michel Eyraud whose mistress, Mademoiselle Bompard, had vanished also. The officials of the *Sûreté* established contact with their confrères at Scotland Yard and as a result the French quarter of London was combed for information. It was not long before it was established that Eyraud and the pretty Gabrielle had resided for some days in Soho and that on July 14th, France's national holiday, the woman had left for Paris taking with her a trunk she had purchased in Oxford Street. Other purchases were also traced to the pretty Gabrielle, a dressing-grown with a strong silken girdle, a pulley block, some yards of

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strong rope and a swivel hook. Surely no murder has ever been more deliberately planned or more callously executed than was that of the rue Tronson Ducoudray. Girdle, rope, hook and trunk, all had their part in the tragedy of the amorous Gouffé. And after depositing their gruesome burden in the ravine on the Lyons Road the two shook the Parisian dust from their feet and departed for Canada, Gabrielle being disguised as a boy for the journey just as, a few years later, Crippen and Miss Le Neve were to join the *Montrose* for the same destination. Gabrielle and Eyraud won through and, once more resuming her natural sex, the little lady resumed with it her undoubted sway over masculine hearts. In other words she soon left Eyraud, of whom she was tiring, for a wealthy admirer named Garanger, in whose company she returned to Europe. Meanwhile Eyraud, hearing of the discovery of the body of Gouffé and of Monsieur Goron's interest in his unworthy self, wrote from America offering to return to Paris and explain everything. He had committed no murder, he wrote, but he knew who had done so and that was Gabrielle Bompard. He intimated that his conscience troubled him and that he wished to be as helpful as he could in clearing up the matter. Goron, instead of replying to the letter, despatched two of his best detectives to New York to bring Mr. Eyraud back to Paris thinking, no doubt, that one interview would be worth a thousand letters.

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And then a strange thing happened, so strange that one wonders whether it could have happened in any country other than France.

Whether, like Bastien, the girl thought that she had her fingers crossed and that she was perfectly safe in denouncing her confederate one cannot say, but one fine morning the fair Gabrielle visited Monsieur Goron in company with her latest capture, Monsieur Garanger. It was quite a friendly and entirely unsolicited call. Perching herself on the corner of the officer's desk, where she was able to afford that gentleman a generous view of a neatly turned ankle, Gabrielle fixed her limpid blue eyes on Monsieur Goron and rattled off her story, her devoted slave Garanger beaming his approval. She, too, knew all about the murder of Monsieur Gouffé and, curiously, her story tallied in many ways with that told by Eyraud in his letter from New York, the only real difference being a change in the name of the murderer. As in the case of the Dumollards and the Mannings, each rounded on the other. And by some curious twist of reasoning, evidently shared by Monsieur Garanger, Gabrielle not only thought she had been, as it were, claiming sanctuary in coming to see Monsieur Goron, but it is almost suggested that she expected praise and, perhaps, a handsome reward for her expression of civic honesty. But Goron saw things rather differently. Much to Gabrielle's surprise and to the indignation of her new protector the little lady was

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there and then arrested and Monsieur Garanger, protesting loudly, had to leave the *Sûreté* alone. Later, Eyraud was traced to Havana where by a curious coincidence he ran foul of a man whom he had known in Paris, who communicated with the authorities. It was the end of the hunt and Goron's two detectives returned to Paris with their prisoner. Eyraud died execrated by all Paris on a guillotine erected before the door of Grand Rougette on February 3rd, 1891. Gabrielle, lauded to the skies and regarded as a long suffering girl who had been drawn into crime by a brute, received gifts of flowers and fruit in her cell and countless love-letters, and was for a short space the idol of all Paris. Then she, too, passed behind bars. She gained her freedom in twelve years and died in 1926. It is said that her attraction followed her even into the prison, that the coarse convict dress could not altogether disguise her femininity and that she won all hearts by her gentleness and charm. Even the prosecuting counsel had the kindest things to say of Gabrielle at her trial, training the whole battery of his accusation on to her male companion. Pointing dramatically to the slender little figure in the dock, dabbing at her big blue eyes with her dainty handkerchief, her little rounded shoulders shaking with her sobs, he said : "She is not a woman, nothing but a child, a motherless child, abandoned to her worst instincts without a strong hand to drag her away from the edge of the

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abyss. . . ." A somewhat biased description, surely, of a woman who was one of the most callous murderers of her or any other day.

But at least Gabrielle and Eyraud were allowed a run for their money. It was nearly two years between the murder of Gouffé and the execution of Eyraud ; Vere Goold and his wife had barely two days at liberty before the law fastened upon them. The Vere Goolds were adventurers, he an Irishman of charming manners and excellent family and she a French dressmaker. Where the couple obtained the wherewithal on which to live life as they thought it should be lived one can only guess at, but various businesses were tried without success and we find Sir Vere and Lady Goold—he had adopted the title which it was supposed belonged rightly to a brother—living in a beautifully furnished flat in the Boulevard des Moulins in Monte Carlo and ruffling it with the best. Here, for a little while, fortune smiled radiantly upon them, the Casino tables were kind and money came easily and as easily went. But roulette and baccarat are not to be recommended as a permanent means of financial stability, and in time their run of luck took a turn against them and in a very little while the improvident Sir Vere and his lady found themselves in the deepest of deep water. In their extremity they applied for, and received, monetary loans from certain of their friends, among them being a Madame Levin, the widow of a wealthy

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Swede and the possessor of a magnificent array of jewellery, which she was in the habit of wearing day and night. Madame Levin seems to have been kindness itself to the Goolds but even a wealthy Swedish widow expects repayment of her loans. This repayment, on the evening previous to her departure from Monte Carlo, Madame Levin attempted to bring about by a personal call, ostensibly to say good-bye, at the Boulevard des Moulins. She was leaving Monte Carlo the next day on the Blue Train, she told her friends, and would be glad to receive the small amounts she had from time to time advanced to them. Riviera friendships are merely ships that pass in the night and no doubt the lady thought repayment to be a case of now or never.

Poor Madame was as good as her word. She did indeed leave Monte Carlo immediately but it was not by the Blue Train. Madame left for Marseilles none too carefully packed into a trunk and hand-bag and accompanied by Sir Vere and Lady Goold. Their whole proceeding was futile and almost pitiful in its crass stupidity. Not only was the flat left with blood spattered carpets and curtains, but hotel porters and railway workers had handled the trunk both at Monte Carlo and Marseilles. Again an offensive odour prompted examination and it was seen that blood was even oozing from the trunk, so carelessly and hastily had the poor lady been packed. It seems that the trunk was not at once opened but the depositor was communicated with

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at his hotel by the stationmaster, for Sir Vere seems to have taken no trouble to cover up his tracks. His explanation that the trunk contained poultry was received by the railway authorities politely, as is the way in France, but that was all, and the police were at once called in to take a hand in the matter. The Goolds were arrested when they were on the point of leaving their hotel and as Madame Levin's head was found to be in the handbag that Sir Vere was carrying there was little more to be said. Sir Vere, polished gentleman to the end, tried to take all the blame on himself but it was clear that the lady knew all there was to know about the crime. Her story was that Madame Levin had been followed to the flat by a discarded lover who had heard she was leaving the Riviera and that the man had killed her, her body being found by her husband and herself on their return from the Casino. Thinking quite logically that perhaps they might be suspected of being concerned in the crime they had decided to dismember the body and rid the flat of what might be regarded as evidence against them. As Sir Vere was not allowed to see or communicate with his wife after their arrest it would surely have been the long arm of coincidence stretched to its utmost if their versions of what had happened in the Boulevard des Moulins had tallied. Needless to say the accounts differed in nearly every detail, Sir Vere openly admitting that his had been the

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hand to strike the widow down, a deed he had been driven to by the desperate state of their finances and to his having absorbed a large quantity of brandy. Lady Goold, he admitted, had known what was in his mind but she had taken no part whatever in the murder itself. Sir Vere's loyalty was of no avail. The Court decided that, if one was to be blamed more than the other, that one was the woman, and Lady Goold was duly sentenced to death. But a merciful judge decided that the death sentence should not be carried out and Lady Goold was allowed to accompany her husband into exile at Cayenne. After a few years of captivity typhoid claimed the wife and shortly afterwards Sir Vere chose the simplest way out of his troubles by taking his own life.

It would almost seem that the more trouble a murderer takes in disposing of the body of his victim the easier it is to bring that crime home to him. The mere elaboration of detail is sufficient to link murderer and murdered in a chain of destiny. It is seemingly better to leave the body just where it is and take a chance. Consider the Jack the Ripper murders, where no attempt whatever was made to hide the bodies, and compare them with Wainwright's single crime and the wealth of detail and considered thought he gave to the disposal of Harriet Lane. Miss Huish, whose remains were found in a cellar of a house in Euston Square in 1879, is a case in point.

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To this day no one has suffered for the crime although there can be no doubt whatever that Miss Huish was murdered. When found the remains had been covered with quicklime and there was still a fragment of frayed rope twisted about the woman's throat. But her disposal had been simplicity itself. The killer had merely dragged the unfortunate lady down the cellar steps and left her there, and it is a remarkable fact that although the remains were not discovered for two years or more no one seems to have suspected the grim secret although the house had been inhabited all the time. A servant girl, Hannah Dobbs, was charged with the crime. There was certainly evidence against her and after her acquittal there were long queues of sightseers to visit Madame Tussaud's, where Hannah's effigy was exhibited just *outside* the Chamber of Horrors. Arthur Lambton, late Secretary of the Crimes Club, tells of another case in which an acquitted man was placed in a like situation and who brought an action and succeeded in securing an injunction against the famous show in Baker Street. Mr. Lambton says he thinks the man was Monson of the Ardlamont case and states that his argument was that had he not been charged at Edinburgh in connection with the death of young Hamborough he would never have been considered of sufficient importance to be in the waxwork show at all.

Hannah had certainly been at Euston Square at the same time as Miss Huish, and she was picked

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out at an identification parade as having pawned a watch and chain belonging to the dead lady. Moreover a black cash box that was found beside the body was said to have been seen in the possession of Hannah Dobbs. But against that it was argued that the prosecution had failed definitely to establish the identity of the remains, and the defence threw doubt on the accused possessing the chemical knowledge necessary as to the action of quicklime.

It is a strange thought that here was a case where the murderer committed his deed in a house in London, merely dragged the victim to the cellar, threw a handful of lime over her and left it at that. There was no cementing up of the cellar as with Mrs. Peete, no carrying the remains from place to place in a trunk as with Vere Goold, no digging of graves as in the case of Euphemia Mozok ; and yet all three were brought to justice while the murderer of Miss Huish has gone free now for sixty years. The murder of Norah Upchurch, whose body was discovered in an empty shop in Shaftesbury Avenue in October 1931, is another case in point. After committing his crime the killer merely left the poor girl lying in the passage and, closing the door, was lost in the stream of London's traffic. That crime, has now been avenged, but had Norah's murderer tried to remove the body and hide it there is little doubt but that he would have been arrested and brought to justice long before, and another woman's life been saved.

About twelve years ago the body of a railway

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switchman was found, shot with bullet wounds, in a cutting of the line, and although the victim, a man named Green, was a decent respectable member of the community and a man to be greatly missed, it did not appear that here was a crime other than one of ordinary brutality or perhaps robbery. Green was known to have saved money but it was not thought that he had carried much of this on his way to and from work. He was insured for a large amount for a man in his position and this money was in due course paid out by the insurance company to his wife. The widow and one son who was married and living at a distance comprised the dead man's entire family.

Although the shooting of Bob Green was not front-page news, the police spared no pains in bringing the old man's murderer or murderers to justice. There was one clue, the imprint in the soft ground of the cutting of a woman's shoe with a high heel, and near it a metal buckle. It was this that set Detective Pitcock thinking. There had been no attempt at concealment of the body ; that aspect of the case was to come later, much to the surprise of Pitcock himself.

More as a matter of form than otherwise the detective interviewed the son, LeRoy Green, and his wife Winona, an extremely beautiful girl of about twenty-four years of age. The distance they lived from the scene of the crime provided a perfect alibi, and the case would no doubt have

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passed into the files of undiscovered crimes had it not been for a small thing that struck Pitcock during one of his visits to Bob Green's house. The lovely Winona was then staying with her bereaved mother-in-law and it was the girl's somewhat strange manner during his visit that roused the detective's suspicions. Moreover, during the time he was in the house he had noticed a curious odour of something burning and, asking the source of the smell, was told by Winona that she had been burning odds and ends in the kitchen stove. Instead of, as many men would have done, rushing out into the kitchen and raking over the ashes, Pitcock showed no concern, but within a few minutes instructions were issued that all refuse from the Green house was to be placed in a particular spot on the town's rubbish heap and carefully sorted. It was then that the detective found among the embers and rubble the remains of a pair of high-heeled shoes but only one buckle, the fellow of the one that had been found by the dead body of Bob Green.

On his next visit to Green's house Pitcock found that Winona and her mother-in-law had left for a destination unknown and that even the girl's husband did not know where they were. The hue and cry was on. The police sought high and low for the missing women but when at last traces were found it was of one woman only, Winona, who had been to a bank and changed a cheque



*Tom*

WINONA GREEN, WHO MURDERED HER MOTHER AND  
FATHER-IN-LAW.



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of her mother-in-law's for a large amount. It was soon seen upon scrutiny that the signature was forged and now, with the bank clue to work on, the net tightened. Winona was arrested in company with her husband and taken to the station for enquiries. LeRoy loudly protested his innocence but it was soon seen that Winona was shielding herself under a mass of lying statements. One by one the lies were smashed : the alibi on the night of Green's murder was proved no alibi at all, the sale of the buckled shoes was traced to Winona, and she was faced with the forged cheque—a formidable array of evidence that even the resourceful Winona could not dispute. The confession came at last and even the case-hardened detectives were aghast at the enormity of the beautiful girl's crimes. It appears that Winona had lent her mother-in-law money on the understanding that this was to be repaid after Green's insurance money had been collected. But by the time the cheque from the insurance company had come in old Mrs. Green had discovered a secret that made anything in the nature of paying out good money out of the question. To Winona's repeated demands for payment the cunning old lady had merely smiled and reminded her daughter-in-law that there were such things as execution sheds.

And then had begun a reign of terror in which the two women dared not let one out of the sight of the other. And knowing what we do of Winona,

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it is hardly to be thought that she would put up with nonsense of this sort from anyone. So during a drive out into the country Winona calmly shot the old lady and concealed her body deep in the heart of a dense woodland where, had it not been for Winona's confession, the woman might have lain undiscovered for years. Then with the money from the forged cheque in her possession Winona had considered that her poor husband had been left quite long enough without her, and it was on her rejoining him that she was arrested. For Pitcock, having lost sight of Winona, had made it certain that he should not lose sight of LeRoy, and had felt sure they would sooner or later establish contact. Winona, now working out a life imprisonment on the Arkansas State Farm for Women, must often look down at the coarse, shapeless prison shoes and think of a pair of little buckled ones with high slender heels. . . .

A classic instance of disposal by concealment is the famous Arran murder in 1889. In this case it took a search-party of some two hundred men to locate on the wastes of Goatfell the body of a tourist, Mr. E. R. Rose, who was on holiday on the island. The place of concealment had been one of those dry walls composed of stones bound together with turf and earth in which fern, heather and bracken grow profusely. Had the body not been found when it was the sturdy growth might have, in time, made it safe for ever. Rose had

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been seen ascending the mountain of Goatfell with one of his fellow boarders at the hotel, a man calling himself Annandale, and who posed as a man of means on holiday. It was proved later that Annandale was in reality a poor clerk named Lawrie earning at the most two pounds a week. He was seen the morning after the ascent with Rose on the pier at Brodick carrying two bags and waiting for the steamer *Ivanhoe* to take him back to Glasgow. The disappearance of Rose, a stranger in Scotland, caused, at first, little comment, and small search-parties that were sent out found nothing on the mountain to cause suspicion. In the holiday season in Arran people come and go and no particular notice is taken of them. But when Rose's relatives in Brixton began to make enquiries the search-parties were again sent out and large numbers of men from the surrounding hamlets took part in the search that led, fully three weeks after the murder, to the body of poor Rose built into the dry wall on a desolate part of the mountain-side. Then the hue and cry was out for Annandale and his identity with Lawrie established. Gradually the net tightened round the hunted man and at last Lawrie was rounded up and captured in a plantation near Hamilton where he had made a futile attempt to cut his own throat. From the first his guilt was apparent and, although he was convicted, he escaped the gallows and served twenty years in Peterhead Gaol.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISPOSAL BY WATER

**F**EW methods to the shedder of blood are more tempting than disposal by water and in most cases this is linked up with dismemberment. In the wide, swiftly running rivers of the western world, swirling their way, as so many of them do, through trackless forest lands and vast swamp areas there are a thousand and one chances against a body being recovered near enough to the scene of the crime to constitute any immediate danger to the murderer. The rapids and falls, too, the rocky bottoms and sun-bleached sandbanks have played many a part in making the identification of a victim well-nigh impossible and have, in many cases, entirely destroyed any evidence there might once have been to guide the investigators as to the cause of death. The dark alleyways, too, that lead down to the wharves and docks of rivers such as the Thames and the Seine afford many an opportunity to the murderer.

Perhaps the most dastardly outrage among the many kidnappings in America in which the agency of water was employed is the murder of young

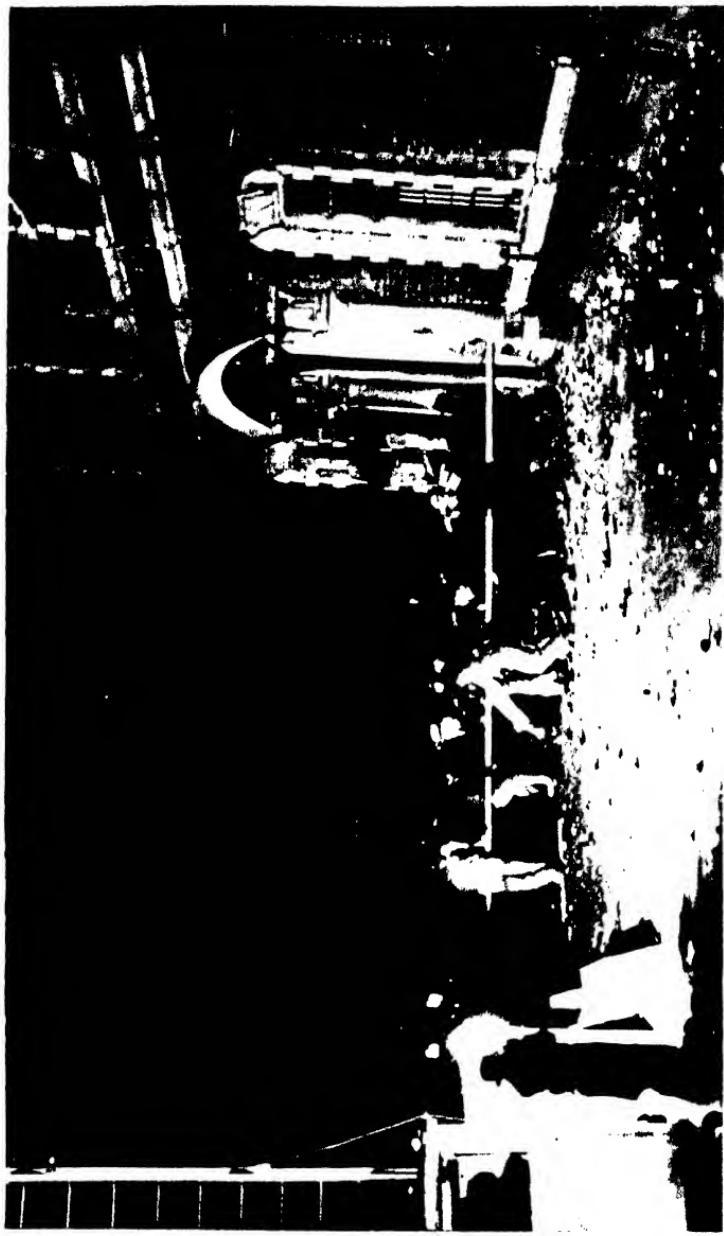
#### DISPOSAL BY WATER

Brooke Hart, son and heir of one of the most prosperous businesses in California. The "snatch" had been engineered with diabolical skill, the youth's car being forced, in broad daylight, to the edge of a country road and hemmed in by two other limousines in which were armed men who made short work of the transference of their victim to one of their own vehicles. They then sped off leaving the youth's car abandoned at the roadside. The anguished parents had not long to wait for news of their son. Telephone calls to the house gave them the minutest instructions as to the amount of the ransom and the manner in which it was to be paid, coupled with threats of the direst penalties to the boy should the police be communicated with in any way. But although the parents no doubt fully appreciated the danger attendant upon official interference the outrage had become so widely known throughout California that, with or without the family consent, the authorities were forced to act. Trap after cunning trap was laid by the police only to be deftly avoided until at last an arrest was made in a garage from which one of the kidnappers was in the act of telephoning to the Brooke Hart home. All calls in the district were being tapped and localised, a fact well enough known to the bandits but which hitherto they had been smart enough to counteract by means of outlying call stations and the use of fast cars waiting by the call-box with engines

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running. But the coup had come too late for anything but vengeance against the kidnappers which was later to be taken in full toll at the hands of an outraged public. Young Brooke Hart was already beyond human help. Like others of their kind his captors had become panic-stricken at the heat of the chase and had decided, as they felt the net closing in upon them, that the presence of their victim was but an added danger. With young Hart out of the way they would be enabled to move with greater freedom, and there was no need whatever for them to relax their demands on the family till the body of their son should be found. So long as the boy was thought to be alive there was a chance of payment. And in this direction the kidnappers had considered themselves safe. The confession grilled out of the two men who were responsible for the crime sent a wave of seething anger over the whole continent, a passion that wrought up to fever-heat, had its outlet in the lynching of both the accused men, Holmes and Thurmond.

Their confessions made terrible reading. After hours of questioning and hours of denial one of the men, maddened by hunger and want of sleep, broke and, faced with his companion's confession, the other could hold out no longer. But for this confession it is doubtful whether the body of young Brooke Hart would ever have been discovered. It was Thurmond who told the police that they



THE ATTACK UPON THE SAN JOSÉ GACOL AT THE LYNNING OF THE MURDERER  
OF BROOKE HART.



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would find the boy in the waters of the Bay, and went on to describe the dreadful scenes when Holmes and he threw the young man over the parapet of San Mateo Bridge. Brooke Hart had been taken to the bridge in a car and in the centre of the roadway had been stunned and his body attached to heavy concrete blocks by binding wire and then, as the boy was seen to be trying to free himself from his bonds when in the water, one of the thugs had climbed down one of the supports of the bridge and emptied his revolver into the body of the drowning man. They admitted that the presence of their victim had become a menace to their own safety, the fact that they still continued their attempts to extort the ransom is nothing new in American kidnapping, as witness the cases of the Lindbergh baby and that of the Californian "Fox," in both cases the victim being already dead before the ransom was paid over.

Brooke Hart's body was found within a few days by duck-hunters not far from the San Mateo Bridge. The sea had in very truth, given up its dead. Hideous as had been the fate meted out to the boy his end was almost merciful compared with that of his slayers. Their end came on Sunday, November 26th when many thousand men and women stormed the gaol of San Jose and surged through the building hurling aside gaolers and police and shouting for the kidnappers to be brought out. They were found, dragged from their cells and,

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screaming for mercy and fighting every inch of the way, were kicked and buffeted through the streets of the town to the place of execution, the city park, where many willing hands were waiting with ropes already slung across tree boughs to carry out the sentence of death delivered by the people themselves. Perhaps the inhabitants of San Jose remembered the strange and devious ways of American justice and were unwilling that the two wretches who were in their hands should escape through one of the meshes of the legal net. Let the lawyers and judges argue the case as long as they liked, but it was, they considered, just as well to make sure while the prisoners were within reach of the arm of their vengeance.

Water postponed the arrest of the Scottish murderer Hugh Macleod for some considerable time, but the killer had, in this case, the wild desolation of the Highlands to assist him. When at last the body of the unfortunate pedlar Murdo Grant was discovered in the waters of Loch Tor-na-heign it was at first thought that the man had either committed suicide or that his death had been the result of an accident. It was only later, when the pedlar's acquaintance with Hugh Macleod was established, together with the fact of the latter's free spending of money, that it was suggested to the Sheriff of Sutherland that there might possibly be a connection between the two men. In the Macleod case, as in those of Mortensen and Mark

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Sharp, the psychic played a curious part. A man named Kenneth Fraser, something of a character in the Highlands, being gifted with second sight, had come forward to tell in open court how, by reason of a dream, he had been able to lead the police to where a portion of the goods from the pedlar's pack had been hidden. It was known that Macleod and the pedlar had been seen together on a desolate part of the hills near Tor-na-heign and that since that time the pedlar had not again been seen. Macleod protested loudly that he was innocent but he broke at last when faced by his father and made a full confession. He had stunned the old pedlar with a heavy stone as they had been walking by the lakeside, thrown the body into the water and then rolled upon it a huge boulder but, finding that method not entirely satisfactory, he had waded into deeper water, carrying the body far out where he had hoped the tangled weeds at the lake bottom would better serve his purpose. It was only when the heat of summer dried up the fringe of the loch that the body of Murdo Grant was at last discovered.

Whether the story told so dramatically in Theodore Dreiser's *American Tragedy* was founded on fact, or whether the author's imagination has given the lead to imitative brains is immaterial, but the fact remains that, before long, any bereaved husband, or lover, rushing tearfully to the police with the tale that his wife, or fiancée, has been

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drowned while boating in one of the lakes that abound in the country to the north of New York will be as open to suspicion as anyone who enters a second-hand trunk shop in the Brixton Road and asks to be shown a nice roomy trunk. For there are certain young men who, finding themselves in the unenviable situation of Dreiser's hero, have taken a like method of extricating themselves from their difficulties. Two cases will suffice to demonstrate not only the one-way mindedness of the murderer already referred to, but the belief in the efficiency of water as an aid to murder. Although the murderer by this method cannot expect the body to remain undiscovered, he can at least hope that any signs denoting cause of death other than drowning may be eliminated before the water gives up its dead. Here are the stories of Lake Harvey and Lake Singletary.

When Freda Mackechnie's body was found drowned in Lake Harvey the police at once proceeded to question her fiancée, a youth named Robert Edwards. The boy answered coolly and without any sign of embarrassment and was apparently frankness itself. He had certainly been with Freda the night before but he had left her to go home and had himself returned to his own home and so to bed. He denied absolutely that he had been near Lake Harvey and it was only when he was faced with the fact that certain tyre marks on the soft earth at the lakeside corresponded, even



"Time"

NEWELL SHERMAN, WIFE MURDERER, OF SINGLETARY LAKE.























































































































































































































































